Record of Christian Work

East Northfield, Massachusetts.

VOL. 42. APRIL, 1923. NO. 4.

I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen, and have the keys of hell and of death!—*Revelation 1. 18.*

RELIGIOUS THOUGHT AND ACTIVITY.

The D. M. Stearns Missionary Fund reports a cash total for 1922 of $65,340.23, not including $8549.22 for the Latin America Evangelistic Campaign. The full amount was passed on to workers in all lands.

Commenting on the **merger of the Evangelical Association and the United Evangelical Church,** Bishop S. P. Spreng summarized its significance in these words:

"This is the first instance in the history of American Protestantism when two church bodies have reunited in the lifetime of the generation that experienced the separation."

An important work of the New York Bible Society is **Bible distribution among the seamen.** The Scriptures are given to those on the great steamers, canal boats, fishing smacks, and all kinds of vessels. More than a million sailors come into the harbor of New York each year, and go out again to every port on earth. The seamen as a class are neglected by many, but the workers of the New York Bible Society carry friendship and good cheer along with the Scriptures that are given every month to thousands of these men. This work is national and worldwide in its influence.

The largest single Bible order ever placed by any organization in the United States, perhaps in the world, was given by the American Bible Society to a firm in New York City. 1,500,000 Scripture portions, consisting of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, the Book of Acts, and the Book of Proverbs, in English and Spanish, constitute this order. These little books are to be uniform in size, 64 pages each, with a separate heavy cover, and will be sold throughout the United States and South America for one cent each.

A new feature this summer at Winona Lake (Indiana) will be a reshaping of the Bible School work so as to offer post-graduate studies and also courses of such standing as will receive credit at theological seminaries and colleges. The school will cover four weeks preceding the Bible conference, July 20 to August 16.

Particulars may be secured from Rev. W. E. Biederwolf, Dean, Winona Lake, Ind.

Three sons of the King Ras Tafari of Abyssinia, successor to King Menelik, have entered Muskingum College at New Concord, Ohio, to receive an American education. They came in furtherance of the king's progressive program for promoting industry and modern thought in his ancient country.

Dr. Thomas Lambie, a United Presbyterian missionary, disclosed that he is in the United States entrusted with the education of the three princes. He also is to obtain a typewriter equipped with the 245 Abyssinian characters, and to negotiate for farm and other machinery needed in Abyssinia.

All friends of the **women's Union Christian colleges** in China, India and Japan will rejoice to hear that the $2,000,000 needed in order to obtain the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Fund gift of $1,000,000 has been raised and the gift has been paid over.

This two million has been given almost wholly by women from all parts of the

United States and Canada. Great credit is due to the indefatigable efforts of Mrs. Henry W. Peabody of Boston, who traveled from coast to coast speaking in favor of the fund. Ten women's mission boards are combined in the support of these colleges.

The "Jewish Encyclopedia" devotes much space to "Apostasy" and "Apostates." The charge is made that most converts to Christianity in pre-Reformation times were slanderers of their Jewish brethren, but a paragraph on modern converts ends with this sentence:

"Most modern converts, unlike the apostates of former centuries, have retained in their heart of hearts love for the faith and the history of their nation, and in critical hours many have stepped forth in its defense."

The above is followed by a long list of famous converts, some of the 204,540 names the "Jewish Encyclopedia" admits were added to the church from the midst of Jewry in the 19th century alone. But the list of eminent Hebrew-Christians, representatives of the élite of the Jewish community, of whom Jews are still proud, is followed by the following significant remark:

"The names of living converts are not included."

Is Mormonism Growing or Dying?

Most outside people suppose the latter. As an intelligent Methodist said to us on the train coming East lately:

"People in our parts haven't paid much attention to it,—just supposed it was dying out."

But statistics show that last year 7118 converts were made to it outside Utah, with 15,666 additions by birth, making the net increase to Utah Mormonism alone of 22,779 in one year; while eastern or "Reorganized" Mormonism shows a larger rate of increase, though recent figures are confused by revision of rolls,—the total gains of both being perhaps 28,000. With over 2000 emissaries out seeking converts all the time, why should not growth be expected?

It goes without saying, however, to one who knows the facts, that very many of the converts would not have become such had they known at the beginning the real facts, whether as to doctrines, practices or history. And the growth by converts seems to be far less than formerly, especially from foreign lands. For instance, in Great Britain, with double or triple the missionary work done by them (143 workers), they report a net gain of 123 converts, and membership 849 less than a year before. Some of this loss is doubtless due to emigration, which is likely included in the gains in United States.

Are Mormons as sincere as formerly?

Many of course are. But the impression grows on us yearly, from personal contact in the West, that many more are Mormons mainly from policy, because they live among Mormons, and it is the easiest thing to do, instead of from any real depth of belief; or from mere inertia, staying where they were brought up.—Rev. John D. Nutting.

Hymn Contest.

The Hymn Society, an organization of hymn writers, composers and hymnbook editors, having its headquarters in New York City, has offered a prize of **fifty dollars for the best hymn tune** to be composed before April 8, 1923, for the Harvard prize hymn of Major Harry W. Farrington. The contest judges are: Rev. Dr. Milton S. Littlefield, Professor H. Augustine Smith, Dr. Clarence Dickinson, Augustus S. Newman and Professor Waldo S. Pratt. The hymn follows:

OUR CHRIST.

I know not how that Bethlehem's Babe
Could in the Godhead be:
I only know the Manger Child
Has brought God's life to me!

I know not how that Calvary's cross
A world from sin could free:
I only know its matchless love
Has brought God's love to me!

I know not how that Joseph's tomb
Could solve death's mystery:
I only know a living Christ,
Our immortality!

Original tunes to this hymn may be submitted, with return postage, to the chairman of the committee of judges, Rev. Dr. Milton S. Littlefield, Corona, Long Island, New York, any time before April 8, on

which date the contest will close. The name and address of the composer should be in a sealed envelope attached to the manuscript, but should not appear on the manuscript.

CHURCH LIFE AND ACTIVITY.

It is important that we have **Spirit-filled men** as trustees, just as it is important that we have Spirit-filled men in the ministry. It takes Spirit-filled men to carry on the work of the Lord.—Simon Gingerich.

It is because so many churches are **audiences rather than brotherhoods** that thousands of Christians, on changing their place of residence, drop out of church connections altogether. Their old church membership meant nothing to them, and therefore membership in another church has no attraction for them.—Dr. Charles E. Jefferson.

At the installation of a friend Dr. John A. Hutton introduced the new minister to the church in these words:

"I hope you will be very good to him, kind to his thinking and hospitable to his new ideas. Life is very hard today for any good minister. A friend of mine," continued the Doctor, "whom I consider to be the greatest living preacher in the English language—an American he is,—wrote to me lately: 'Hutton, I am being bombarded with calls, offers of tens of thousands of dollars' salaries, secretaries, automobiles and long vacations. I wish some congregation would have the ingenuity to invite me to be their minister, offering me **nothing but their love.**' . . . . This is what I ask of you for my friend."

The "Christian Monitor" has a lengthy editorial asking the question, **Shall the Mennonite church encourage a trained ministry?**

It is careful not to criticize the past, and gives older ministers credit for growth and advance in knowledge and experience with the years. But the young man of today who is called to the ministry faces different conditions in education, amusements, habits of the young, transportation, attitude to Bible and church, and so on.

If ministerial training is to be sought, where shall it be secured? What shall be its nature? Can the Mennonite church afford to send its young men to liberal schools and seminaries, or to training schools of other churches? Is it large enough to have a seminary of its own?

The editor does not answer these questions, but wishes to stimulate thought and prayer on the problems of the future.

Rev. B. T. Livingston, secretary of the Evangelistic Association of New England, is planning a series of conferences with the one idea of stimulating the churches to **greater effort along evangelistic lines.**

The afternoon sessions will be devoted to subjects relative to the deepening of the spiritual life and the organization of the church departments for evangelization. The evening themes will be such as to attract the general public, emphasizing church loyalty, and closing with an evangelistic message. The music will be featured under the leadership of Evangelist Lewis E. Smith, well and favorably known throughout New England as a preacher and singer.

The work of the Association is interdenominational, and the plan is to make dates in as many centers as possible, beginning about the middle of April.

The Small Congregation.

Someone may remark, Is it worth while to spend so much time, effort and money in endeavors to keep small congregations up to the high-water mark of prosperity?

In answer I would say, first, that usually the congregations are comparatively small because they are steadily furnishing first-class material for the larger churches of the diocese. Children are baptized, trained in home and church school, presented for confirmation, and soon they leave their native community to seek opportunities for business or professional life in the big towns and cities, adding to the spiritual forces at the centers and leaving the country churches poorer in all but the blessings which flow from unselfish giving.

Furthermore, in these smaller fields of necessity attention is concentrated on vital problems. There is no material to waste on vain speculations and guessings in regard to matters which may furnish some

stimulus to intellectual curiosity, but are at enmity with the faith once delivered to the saints. The large city church may for quite a period preserve a semblance of existence with a negative gospel in the pulpit, but the missionary with his limited flock finds at once that denial of the faith scattereth the sheep. You cannot build up a mission on doubts, or even on social service without the living Christ. Our smaller congregations are kept alive and built up in proportion as their belief in the divine Christ is sure and steadfast. The people make sacrifices gladly because they realize need of the Only Hope of the world.—Bishop Samuel G. Babcock.

RELIGION IN THE Y. M. C. A.

A continent-wide tour of visitations, with purpose to quicken and strengthen the religious life and work of the Young Men's Christian Associations in the United States and Canada, has been conducted by Dr. John R. Mott since last November, closing in St Louis on April 5. The movement had its inception a year ago, when the special commission which had been studying the religious work of the Associations and the religious standing of members made a report which frankly admitted the necessity of reëstablishing and reëmphasizing the religious work as the primary objective.

The program has included three features. First, a series of state-wide or inter-state "retreats." These have been confined to the leaders, both lay and secretarial, of all the Associations in the areas concerned,—city, county, railroad, industrial, student, army and navy, and colored Associations. The aim has been to influence and move the springs of the leadership of the whole brotherhood. In these meetings the leader has given intimate addresses with reference to the spiritual life of the workers and the pronouncedly Christian and evangelistic aspects of the work of the Association; and there have been periods of self-examination, meditation, dedication and united intercession, and a special period given to the building of a minimum religious work program which should be in operation in every Association. The spiritual influence of such retreats is inestimable, as those who have attended them know.

Second, a series of religious work institutes in typical communities across the continent. These have continued for two days, and each visit has included a meeting with the entire employed staff of the Association with reference to quickening their sense of responsibility for this most vital part of the work, and also to stimulating their own spiritual life; a luncheon meeting of the most influential laymen of all Protestant denominations,—the men who because of their position, character and influence can do most to commend the religion and work of Christ to young men and boys; a meeting with the Protestant clergymen on the most helpful relations which should exist between the Association and the churches; and a three-hour meeting of all the Christian working forces on behalf of young men and boys in the community, whether these forces are in connection with the Association or not. Also, whenever the time permitted, a meeting with immediate evangelistic purpose confined largely to young men and boys from eighteen to twenty-five years of age. In connection with these meetings the intent has been to work out a new and enlarged religious work program for the Association in each community, and to augment the religious forces. These are typical visits, designed to set an example to other communities.

Third, the organizing in each state of deputations of laymen and secretaries who will carry the message and the plans to hundreds of communities which it will be impossible for the touring party to visit. In connection with each state-wide retreat special time will be given to preparing these deputations for their vitally important work, through which it is aimed to reach the last local Association with a quickening message and impulse.

This is one of the most important evangelistic movements of the day, working in a special field which has a prepared constituency and a wide outreach. It carries out the spirit of the International Convention at Atlantic City, which reaffirmed so strongly the supremacy of Christ and the primacy of the church, and declared its absolute loyalty to the original objective, winning young men and boys to Christ. It

makes the word "Christian" in the name of the Association the supreme word which it was intended to be, and should mark a new era in the spiritual life of the great organization whose historic policy is to promote the growth of the Christian Church.

COÖPERATION IN MISSIONS.

Working Together at Practical Tasks.

Those who jibe at denominational aggressiveness may well give heed to the 16th annual meeting of the Home Missions Council and the Council of Women for Home Missions. The Home Missions Council represents 42 home mission boards from 27 denominations, and the Council of Women for Home Missions 21 boards and 21 denominations, a total of 63 boards and 28 denominations, all doing business for the kingdom of God in coöperative tasks.

Not only do these two councils with their widespread denominational affiliations themselves work through joint committees, but they also coöperate with the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America and its commissions, the Y. M. C. A. and the Y. W. C. A., the Committee on Coöperation in Latin America, the Missionary Education Movement, the Council of Church Boards of Education, organizations representing Sunday schools, young people, moral reforms, various agencies for publication, for survey and research, and branches of the federal government dealing with problems in the field of home missions.

Concrete Illustrations That Cheer.

That these two home missions councils are getting results in the field of coöperation between denominational home missions agencies is seen in some of the concrete illustrations of work done by single denominations for all the other denominations.

A Bureau of Information of Foreign Language Publications is maintained by the Board of Home Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Experimental work in the field of recruiting candidates for the home mission field is made possible by the Congregational Home Missionary Society, the Woman's American Baptist Home Missionary Society, and the Methodist Episcopal Board. The beginning of a Protestant Immigrant Follow-up has been made possible through the loan of workers by the Protestant Episcopal Church. This follow-up is an endeavor to follow Protestants who pass through Ellis Island to their final destination in the country, wherever it may be, and bring them into contact with the constructive agencies of the community,—the industries, the homes, the schools, the churches, wholesome recreation, and those forms of government which the new arrival ought to know.

The recent publication of the Race Group Studies came about through their being edited by the secretary of the Baptist City Mission Society of New York and the underwriting of their publication by different denominations. Colportage work among the Japanese on the Pacific Coast is maintained by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. A pamphlet on "First Steps in Church Building" was prepared by the secretary of the Executive Committee of Publications of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and the architect-secretary of the American Baptist Home Mission Society. "A Manual of Church Plans" is now being prepared by a staff member of the Board of Home Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Episcopal Church, assisted by secretaries and architects of a half dozen other boards.

Denominations are ceasing to begin new departures in home missions work in the old competitive way of starting in without reference to what any other denomination is doing. With representatives of the staffs of all home mission agencies on the committees of the Home Mission Council and the Council of Women for Home Missions, it is possible to find the place of real need and the best point at which to make a beginning. This makes possible the securing of the approval and fellowship of those already at work in a given field and insures coöperative success.

Cultivating an International Mind.

The 30th annual session of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, held at Bethlehem, Pa., last January, the old historic center of Moravian missionary

activity, gave fresh evidence of the value of the conference as a means of drawing together the leaders of the foreign mission enterprize. In the United States and Canada there are a great variety of societies, large and small, those with missions in every part of the globe and those which work in a limited area. In large measure their problems are similar, and may be attacked and solved coöperatively. The mere assembling each year to study together their common problems throughout the world draws our mission boards into a relationship which promotes mutual understanding and a grasp on all matters of fundamental concern.

The conference this year was truly representative. Fifty-six of the boards and missionary organizations of North America were represented, not only by their responsible secretaries and board members, but by distinguished missionaries who came from all quarters of the globe.

At the opening session the Rev. Paul de Schweinitz, D. D., of the Moravian Board of Missions, in welcoming the great audience, portrayed the remarkable missionary history of Bethlehem, Pa. He declared that the first American missionaries ever commissioned to preach the gospel outside of North America were sent out from Bethlehem in 1746, sixty-four years prior to the dispatch of the famous group of missionaries by the American Board to Asia. In reply Dr. Endicott of Toronto, the genial and eloquent chairman of the conference, paid a stirring tribute to the heroism, self-sacrifice and devotedness of Moravian missionaries from the eighteenth century down to today.

The Foreign Missions Conference has a wide range, not only transacting a great deal of business and considering many problems of foreign missionary administration, but listening to appeals of various kinds of need, and making helpful studies of missionary activity. The business of the conference centers in the consideration of the detailed report of the Committee of Reference and Counsel, which acts as the standing committee of the conference throughout each year, dealing with the matters of national and worldwide interest which concern all our mission boards. These matters range from the holding of many kinds of conferences in this and in other countries and the promotion of the work of various commissions to providing for publications, for research, and for the innumerable details of the missionary enterprize.

The review of various mission areas by those who know them at first hand is always a significant part of the conference program. This year the Near East, India, the Far East and Latin America were predominantly at the front.

Dr. Arthur D. Berry of the Aoyama Gakuin, speaking of Japan, referred to the breaking down of the old Mikado-centered social, intellectual and religious life of Japan. He said that the great task of today, viewed by non-Christian as well as Christian leaders, was the development of a new idealism to fit modern Japan. He pleaded for a renewal of the old-time friendliness between Americans and Japanese, saying that it was fully deserved by the great mass of the best people in Japan and would be heartily reciprocated.

In regard to India much was said concerning the ferment going on in the minds of its people. Evidently the way forward is not perfectly apparent, even to missionaries. Rev. Allen E. Armstrong of Toronto, fresh from a visit to India, made a strong plea for the strengthening of the National Christian Council for India, now under way.

The deepest impression made by any speaker from the Orient was made by Dr. Cheng Ching Yi of China, one of the foremost leaders of the Chinese church today. He pointed out that the development of the Christian movement in China was toward the Chinese Christians assuming more and more the burdens of carrying forward the work of Christ in all parts of China. Chinese Christians shirk no responsibilities, but need leadership. Dr. Cheng pleaded for the enlargement of the means of training those competent for this leadership, that they might be able to assume its burdens. The very sight of Dr. Cheng in his clearness of vision and his competency was an inspiration to the audience.

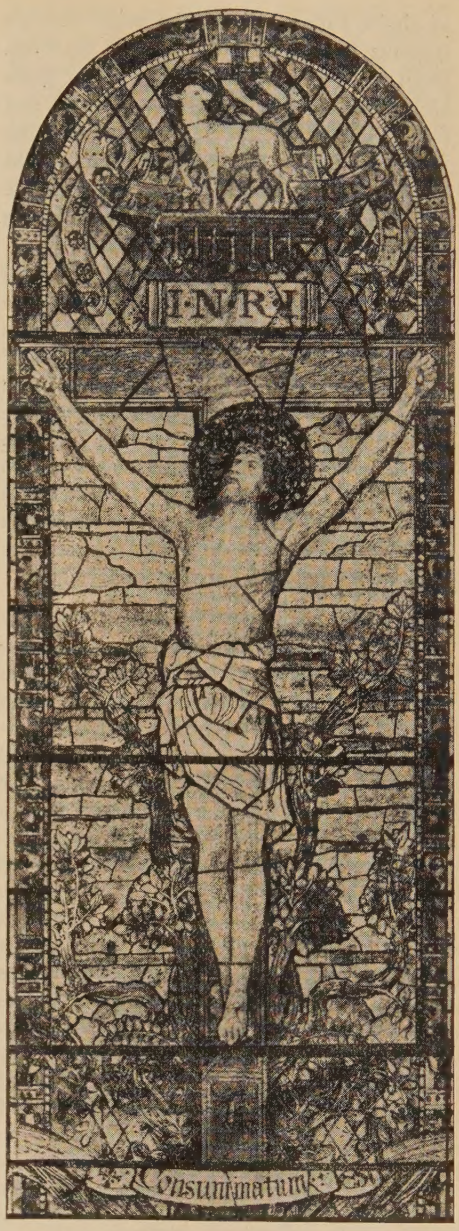
The situation in Latin America was surveyed in the ample report of the Committee on Coöperation. Dr. Speer took occasion to deplore the lessening of that era of abound-

ing good will and understanding which seemed to prevail during the war between North and South America. He urged the value of a renewal of this friendliness. In fact, the note of international friendship was sounded again and again as the wisest method of meeting most of the problems which vex our international relationships today.

Christian Education in China.

An important issue, considered in much detail by the conference, was that of educational work being carried on under Christian auspices in China. The members of the China Educational Commission, sent out in 1921 on behalf of the missions at work in China to make a careful investigation of the educational situation in that area, whose valuable report was published last summer under the title "Christian Education in China," made stirring addresses regarding the steps to be taken to develop a resourceful, independent, fruitful church and community life among the Christian Chinese. They were a unit in favoring a far more thorough scheme of Christian education in China.

Conservation, concentration and coöperation, according to Chairman Ernest D. Burton of Chicago, was the proper motto to be adopted by the boards. He pleaded for the conservation of the evangelistic results of Christian schools and colleges in China. President Butterfield of Amherst Agricultural College, in speaking about the evangelization of rural China, stated that there were at least one hundred thousand Chinese country communities comprising a group of hamlets and containing some thousands of population, each capable of being treated as an educational unit and sorely needing a simple training in the development of community resources, material and spiritual alike. President J. Leighton Stuart of Peking University, speaking of the higher institutions of learning in China, favored the pooling of their resources in accordance with the far-sighted plans of the commission, even at the cost of such reorganization as may be required. He believed that Christian schools still have a superlative opportunity in China, but only as they equip themselves to take the lead in making educational history. President Mary E. Woolley of Mt. Holyoke College, discussing the education of women in China, paid high tribute to the capacity and earnestness



"It Is Finished!"

Upper half of the Crucifixion window in the Church of the Holy Trinity, Philadelphia. A study of our Lord in the moment of his dying triumph, designed and executed by William Willet and Anne Lee Willet. (Copyright by Willet Studios.)

of choice Chinese girls, who make firstrate students but demand the best of teaching. Dean William Russell of Iowa State University emphasized the devotedness and fine character of the missionary teaching forces in China, but declared that it was suicidal to overlook other elements in educational efficiency, such as adequate equipment and professional training.

The impression left by these addresses was very deep. It was abundantly clear that the sending to China of such a group of leaders to study educational conditions was a bit of real statemanship. This able commission is the third which has gone out within three years under the auspices of our Foreign Mission Boards. The first one went to India in 1919-20, the other to Africa in 1921. Each of the three has been the means of awakening and directing attention to educational problems of first importance.

At every conference some vital theme is opened for free discussion. At the Bethlehem Conference this theme covered the elements in our thinking at home which require modification in order that our missionaries on the field may not be hindered from helping their peoples to attain a true and natural Christian experience. It was generally agreed that we cherish many distinctions in thinking and in practice here at home which ought not be carried to the mission field. It was unusual to hear that in China Christianity is not infrequently denounced by non-Christian students as being capitalistic, unscientific, superstitious and unphilosophical. It was felt that such misunderstandings could only be met by continuing to send to China well-trained missionaries who are sincerely desirous of understanding the life of the people to whom they go. At the present time, as always in past years, only men and women who can meet the Chinese in a spirit of true friendliness, without race or national pride, can effectively present the gospel of Christ to the people. The possession of an international mind is a primary asset for the missionary. It is difficult for most Westerners to eliminate from our minds a sense of pride and superiority.

One paper that made a profound impression upon the gathering was presented by Mr. James M. Speers, president of the James McCutcheon Company of New York City, a well known Christian layman. He interpreted the impressions of a recent extended tour of the mission field. He made the rather novel suggestion that the missionary task must be kept in the hands of those relatively young and vigorous by a regular scheme of retirement for age. He also advocated the utmost care in the acceptance of missionary candidates, in their education, and in following them up at intervals during the active period of service in order that they might be fitted to cope with the conditions which confront all missions today.

The conference closed with the induction of Rev. Allen R. Bartholomew, secretary of the Foreign Mission Board of the Reformed Church in the United States, as the chairman of the conference of 1924.

OTHER LANDS.

Hon. Justice J. J. Maclaren of Toronto, Canada, is now the honored president of the World's Sunday School Association. He succeeds the late Hon. John Wanamaker, who was elected to the office of president at the convention held in Tokyo, Japan, in 1920. The term of office is the quadrennium between the conventions. Justice Maclaren was the first vice-president, and in virtue of that office has now become the president of this Association.

Early in December the **Legislative Assembly of Quebec** adopted a motion resolving that future sessions should open with the following petition:

"O eternal and almighty God, from whom cometh all power and proceedeth all wisdom, through whom kings reign and make just laws, behold us here assembled in thy presence to make laws conducive to the welfare and prosperity of our Province! Grant us, we beseech thee, O merciful God, to desire naught but what is conformable to thy will, to seek it with prudence, to know it with certainty, and fully accomplish it for the honor and glory of thy name and the happiness of our country!"

Revival services in Westminster Abbey! Overflowing congregations, people standing in the aisles! A spirit of earnest expectancy and fervent prayer!

About forty missioners, with the bishop of London and the dean of Westminster, gathered in the Abbey to begin a ten-days mission. The bishop preached the sermon, and told his hearers that there was probably no part of England that required purging more than that part of London in which the mission was about to be held. There were literally thousands of people in that district who never went inside a church or chapel, and who were apparently dead to the gospel. "And yet," said he, "some of the most glorious saints who adorn Christendom are living in Mayfair."—"Christian."

Through the gift of the **Russia Evangelization Society,** 156 Fifth Avenue, New York City, the American Committee for Relief of Russian Children has opened a new feeding station in Alexandrovsk, the Ukraine, which will care for five hundred children. The station has been named "The American Christian Relief Mission Station." The Russia Evangelization Society sent a Christmas check for one thousand dollars, to be followed by monthly gifts of five hundred dollars until the summer harvests are in. At the rate of one dollar a month, which is the amount asked by the Children's Committee to feed one child, this will provide for five hundred little famine orphans. In addition the Russia Evangelization Society shipped through the American Committee for Relief of Russian Children four thousand dollars' worth of clothing, which will be distributed in the Ukraine among the destitute where churches affiliated with the Russia Evangelization Society are located.

"We make no discrimination on religious grounds in our charity," declared Mr. Norman Smith, secretary, "but we are naturally more interested in localities where our Russian brethren live."

According to the following translation of a communication to the "Nur Afshan" (Light Scatterer), of Ludhiana, **Sadhu Sundar Singh's aim of establishing an Ashram** (religious place of abode) is being reached:

"On the 30th November, Mahant Farnik Agarwal (Krist-Anand), Sadhu Sundar Singh, and Padre Wa'z held a committee meeting at Rurki, to consult about the Ashram. Sadhu Sundar Singh agreed to take part in the Ashram, but as his path of service does not admit of his staying in one place, he declined the position of resident Mahant, but promised to help in every possible way; that is to say, he will, in a way, hold the position of traveling Mahant, and when it may become necessary will serve in the Ashram as instructor and religious teacher, and take a part in counsel. Padre Wa'z Sahib (of Clarkabad, Lahore District,) is entrusted with the clerical and miscellaneous work, so all correspondence about the Ashram should be addressed to him.

"The name Krist Ashram has been adopted for the institution. Accordingly, it is requested that helpers should so designate it. Should any change in the regulations become necessary, the two Mahants, in consultation with the helpers, will have authority to act in this matter."

An article on **"The Vatican, Italy and World Politics"** in the "Dearborn Independent" foresees a definite union between church and state in Italy. With the increased worldwide influence and powers of the Vatican it is felt that the pope could now forget the old limited geographical Roman frontier with its political implications, leaving these to the state while of course retaining pontifical sovereignty.

Premier Mussolini favors coöperation between the ecclesiastical and constitutional forces.

"I am religious," he is reported to have said. "I think religion is the great fundamental moral force in the life of the people, and I am hostile to anything that savors of the atheistic or anti-clerical."

That statement by itself would easily pass for conciliative or conventional, but by resurrecting another statement made a year before one can get the right slant of meaning.

"The problem demanding most urgent solution is the problem of relations between the church and state," Mussolini said in the Chamber. "For 20 years we, by reading Carducci's literature, have become imbued with the idea that the Vatican is a kind of old bloodthirsty wolf, but all this, though perhaps brilliant in literature, appears to us Facisti as somewhat anachronistic in

reality. I affirm that the Latin and imperial traditions of Rome are today represented by Catholicism. I affirm that there is today in Rome only one ideal which makes a world-wide appeal, and it is the ideal which radiates from the Vatican."

Twenty-five Dollars for a Sunday-School Design.

A design is wanted in connection with the publicity for the ninth convention of the World's Sunday School Association which will be held in Glasgow, Scotland, June 18-26, 1924. The insignia chosen will be used on the letterhead of the World's Association, all printed matter setting forth the plans for that great gathering in Scotland, and also in the souvenir program which will be used when 4000 delegates assemble in St. Andrews Hall, Glasgow. When the eighth convention was held in Japan in 1920 the special design bore the words, "To Tokyo I want to go."

For some months a design has been used on the Glasgow Convention literature, but a member of the Transportation Committee said at a recently held meeting that he did not like it very much. This led to the offer of $25 by another member, that a general invitation might be made asking for drawings to be submitted in competition for this reward. The design will be reduced to a circle one inch in diameter. The words "World's Ninth Sunday School Convention, Glasgow, June 18-26, 1924," may appear, if desired by the artist. All designs should be submitted in sealed envelopes marked, "Glasgow Convention Design." The envelopes will be opened July 1, 1923, when the contest closes. Address World's Sunday School Association, 216 Metropolitan Tower, New York City.

Vatican Policy in the Near East.

The main points of Vatican policy in the Near East have been summarized by Signor Giulio Castelli in the "Nazione."

The first is to prevent the spread of the Orthodox faith, whether Slav or Greek. In this point the Vatican has received enormous assistance from the Turk, who has not only prevented the spread of the Orthodox faith but has almost blotted it out of existence in Asia Minor.

Another point of Vatican policy is to obtain a formal undertaking from the Turks not to obstruct the work of religious institutions, and to abstain from the persecution of Christian minorities.

The third point is to prevent any action on the part of the Western powers favorable to Protestant influence through American and English charitable missions, and at the same time to frustrate the spread of Jewish influence through English schemes of Jewish colonization.

Minor points are the strengthening of the position of the orders which have acquired status in the Near East, as the Franciscans in their capacity of guardians of the holy places, and the Jesuits, who have helped educational work and scientific research through their university at Beyrouth. In pursuance of this policy the Vatican has nominated an envoy to represent it at the coronation of the new sultan, the nominee of the Angora government.

The Canadian Vimy Memorial Church.

The Canadian Vimy Memorial Church, after two years of financial campaign, of correspondence with France, and of perfecting plans, is now becoming a brick and mortar fact, much to the satisfaction of the congregation of Lens and of the Protestants of Canada, who wished to commemorate in this befitting manner the memory of their valiant dead and of their victory.

The idea had been mooted as early as the spring of 1918, when Principal D. J. Fraser moved at the General Assembly in London, Ontario, that the appeal of the Protestants of France for assistance in the work of restoration of destroyed churches, manses and mission halls be heartily supported and commended to the generosity of congregations and members of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. At the Ottawa meeting in 1920 Dr. Charles Merle d'Aubigne made a moving and eloquent appeal which led to the cordial approval of the scheme for the erection of the "Canadian Vimy Memorial Church." The enthusiastic and official endorsation of the plan commended it to the Presbyterian people.

A strong interdenominational committee was formed in Montreal, and a financial campaign was launched on the 14th of

November, 1920. But the financial depression was beginning, and the sum hoped for was far from being reached. However, the fund received $33,902, of which 260,000 francs was sent to France.

Now, after many delays, the pick-axe has removed the charred remains of the former building, and the masons have begun to erect the walls of the church.

It will be an attractive Romanesque structure, with a seating capacity meeting the requirements of the Protestant community. Tablets will bear commemorative inscriptions, and memorial windows may be put up by private enterprize. A parsonage and a small building for caretaker and social activities, built with reparation money, will complete this center of spiritual uplift and international friendship.

CURRENT THOUGHT.

The world has never seen a craftsman who could compare with **the ancient Egyptian** for accuracy, manual dexterity, and love of perfection in his work.—Prof. Flinders Petrie.

Is there any more disrespect for the prohibition law on the part of the liquor interests than they showed for the license laws? Did they ever keep the law prohibiting the sale of liquor to minors or the sale of liquor after hours, or the sale of liquor on Sunday? They **never respected any law,** and they never will.—Wesleyan Methodist.

The other day, while walking down the street, a window was raised, a head was thrust out, and a voice said:

"Don't forget you have neighbors, if you want any help!"

I went my way feeling immeasurably better and happier in spirit. It took me back to the old-fashioned town I grew up in, where the neighbors ran in when there was sickness, when a helping hand was needed and extended. I felt at home with that cheery greeting. Life is sweeter, better and more wholesome, anyway, when lived that way.—Rev. Benjamin F. Wyland.

It is a humiliating spectacle indeed to see professed Christians eager to prove the sacred Scriptures wrong, or at any rate as capable of mistake as any other book. Indeed, to hear some men speak we would suppose that the Bible was far less to be relied on than the Huxleys and Darwins, the Drivers and Farrars, etc., of our times. Without for one moment calling in question the ability of such men in their own provinces of learning, and without pretending to any remarkable attainments of our own, we would nevertheless remind our readers that there is an infinite distance separating God and man. "God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few."—Dr. A. H. Burton.

A Gift to Jesus.

What can I give him,
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd,
I would bring a lamb;
If I were a wise man,
I would do my part;
Yet what can I give him?
Give him my heart!

—Christina Rossetti.

An acquaintance with the **New Testament scholarship of the last two generations** will, I am sure, convince any one that it is steadily gaining a more serious ethical and religious interest, a keener appreciation of the social import of the teaching of Jesus. No scholar today thinks of setting forth Jesus as the hero of a romance or as a mere lay figure for poetical description. New Testament scholarship has become desperately in earnest. It is possessed of a better apparatus, a larger confidence in its method, and above all it has come to see that its supreme duty is to bring the spirit and teaching of Jesus to our modern world. If it has lost something of the adventurous spirit of pioneers like Renan, it has acquired the solidity of the builder of civilization. For it is convinced that since Jesus, it is either he or social chaos.—Dr. Shailer Mathews.

It costs far less to give a good direction to one hundred boys than to repair the loss of a single man who, not having had the benefit of education and instruction, pursues a vicious course.—Cavour.

On the suggestion of Rev. F. W. March, D. D., we have been sending copies of the RECORD monthly to each of the eight members of the 1923 class of **Beirut theological seminary.** "I thank you on their behalf, and trust that the good done to them, and through them to many others, may prove to you a satisfactory reward. The Arabic language is poor in evangelical literature, and these young men appreciate all they can get in English."

The conservative Christian leaders in Shantung have established the **Hwa Bei Theological Seminary** at Tenghsien. The curriculum has been lengthened to four years of five and a half months each, so as to give ample time for students to engage in evangelistic work, thus testing their ability to serve the churches and giving practical experience in addition to educational culture, while also enabling students to do more for themselves in the way of self-support. The school also aims by its dormitory system and mode of life to avoid detaching students from Chinese life and habits.

Word comes from the Philippines of **Matias Cuadra,** a flame of fire in his consecration and evangelism. He was born a Moro, trained by a Jesuit priest, got hold of a Bible, made his way to Mr. Lund of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, was at Ellinwood School while attending Union Theological Seminary, was ordained by a committee representing five or six denominations, and is now working in Jolo, where the Sultan of Sulu lives, doing splendid work, under the Missionary Alliance. His wife is a graduate of Ellinwood School for Girls, is a fine musician, pretty as can be, and an earnest little evangelist. They make an unusual gospel team.

A missionary was teaching a class of Filipinos the commandment "Thou shalt not steal," and the question of gambling was discussed. The story was told of a conscientious old man who joined the church, and then became convinced that in his younger days when a prosperous gambler he had robbed many helpless women and children by gambling with their fathers and husbands. But the gambling was done in distant places and among strangers, so he had no way of restoring to them what he had unlawfully won. So, as **restitution,** he built a "prophet's chamber" in his home where he could entertain the itinerant missionary, furnished part of the money to erect a much needed church, installed a new lighting plant in the church, and above all he has been a most faithful Bible student and follower of his Master.

A personal letter was received by one of the teachers in the Sapporo Girls' High School in Japan from a friend who is a missionary among the mountaineers of West Virginia, telling how some of her poor little school children had offered all their pitiful savings for a tiny Japanese doll she had received. Accordingly, a representative girl from each class, after having been well primed on the life of the mountaineers, presented its various phases to an interested and enthusiastic student body. When an opportunity was given after the meeting, there was a stampede to sign up either to dress little Japanese dolls for these mountaineer school children, or to provide the dress materials. In early November the dolls were collected, and an exhibit was held at which two hundred and fifty pairs of almond eyes took their last excited look at **seventy dolls** in soft, bright kimonos before starting them on their long journey to the Cumberland Mountains.

An account of **the great revival of 1921 in Congo Belge** is published by the Baptist Promotion Board, 276 Fifth Avenue, New York, at one cent.

There have been three revivals at Sona Bata, where Rev. Thomas Moody is stationed. "We had about 1500 members, and had been baptizing about 10 per cent a year. Then God gave us a revival out of a clear sky. May, 1921, we noticed the people were coming better to services. That year we baptized over 2000, and over 3000 in 1922, and the work is still going on. We have had 46 baptismal services, at which from one to 537 were baptized. Schools have increased from 66 to 177, all the

increased work being taken care of by extra gifts of the people.

"I have been in three revivals during my 33 years in the Congo, and this was the greatest and best. How thankful I am to have had a part in it! What God still has in store I do not know."

Dr. William H. Sheppard, a colored missionary of the Southern Presbyterian church for twenty years, author of "Pioneers in Congo," a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, recently addressed the students in Hampton Institute on missionary problems in Africa.

"A change has come in the Congo. We have five great concessions now throughout the Kasai Valley. Since King Albert has come to the throne things have changed altogether. He is building railroads, bridges, hospitals and schools. He is doing all that he can for the natives of the Congo. There are now five great mission stations, with 65 white missionaries in the five stations and over 900 native evangelists, who are also school teachers. Thirty years ago they had not heard of the sabbath day: now the sabbath day is kept beautifully all through the country."

He was a little naked, dirty, ignorant Igorot boy. The future held in store for him nothing more than a mere existence, the wearing toil of wresting a scant living from the rocky soil of his mountain home. He lived in a little thatched, conical-shaped hut, the door a hole through which he crawled on hands and knees,—a house with no ventilation, no light, but much dirt and filth.

And then the Christian church came to the mountains! It took this little wretched Igorot boy into the day school of the mission. He learned the story of the Master, and it inspired him with a desire to serve his fellowmen. He grew in stature and wisdom. He entered the university in Manila. And now **Dr. Hilary Clapp** has gone back up into the mountains of Luzon to minister to the bodies of his people, the Igorots of Luzon!

One of the most hopeful signs in the American Baptist Telugu Mission is **the coming of the Sudra.** Broadly speaking, Hindu society may be divided into three classes,—the Brahman or high caste Hindu at the top, the Panchama or outcaste at the bottom, and the Sudra in the middle. The Sudras are divided into many sub-castes, some of them very low in social status and others occupying a high position. By occupation they are farmers and artizans, for the most part. A strong, sturdy, self-reliant people, they constitute the great middle class in India, and are the backbone of Hindu society. Christianity, beginning as ever in its history at the bottom of Hindu society, is gradually working upwards. Having laid hold of the outcaste, despised and down-trodden for centuries, and having lifted him up into a new manhood in Christ Jesus, giving him a new social and religious status, it is now rapidly and powerfully permeating the great middle classes, the Sudras.

It is the conviction of experienced missionary workers in India that the day is not far distant when we will see even greater mass movement to Christianity among the Sudras than we have witnessed among the outcastes. "When that day comes it will be like the inrushing of the ocean tides, and the kingdom of God will come with power. Our reports glow with the hope of the coming of that day."

In writing of the help and inspiration that he receives from the RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK, saying that if he did not receive its uplifting and encouraging messages he would miss them much indeed, Rev. William C. Terril, D. D., of the South East Africa Methodist Episcopal Mission, adds this regarding his work:

"My headquarters will be in Johannesburg, which has been said by Dr. Jesse W. Jones of the Phelps-Stokes Commission to be **the key to South Africa,** as South Africa is the key to the whole continent. We can see the force of his statement when we remember that in the gold and coal mines of this district there are over 200,000 natives, who have been recruited from almost all over known Africa for work. They remain from six months to two years, coming in contact with every form of civilization, good, bad and indifferent, and very much of the latter two. This they carry back to their jungle home, and Africa is being permeated with the

spirit these men catch in this great cosmopolitan center. One hundred and one different languages and dialects are spoken here, and the Scriptures are circulated in them. The weal or woe of Africa depends very largely upon the Rand. My work will take me also to Portuguese East Africa, as superintendent of the Mission. In the Transvaal there are 66 mine compounds where the Methodist Episcopal Mission has work,—schools and churches. In Portuguese East Africa there are 90 centers where we have schools and churches. The work is prospering and growing, and the awakening on the part of the African jungle man for something other than his own religion is most cheering. The church of Christ must meet him at the very threshold as he emerges, with inquiry in his heart, from his paganism, and save him from a worse thing than his own paganism, Islam."

EASTER DAY AT MEERUT.

Miss D. J. Snelson.

"The first day of the week . . . . when it was yet dark." Thus simply began the record of the first glad Easter morning long ago, and similar words might introduce an account of Easter Sunday by a member of St. Thomas's Church, Meerut, India.

It was indeed "yet dark" when a large group of Christian Indians, old and young, assembled with lanterns and candles to begin their commemoration of the glorious fact of the resurrection from the dead of their Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

In quiet reverence, awe and expectation we formed in procession, some four or six abreast, to walk to the cemetery three-quarters of a mile away. Before starting, Canon Bannerjee led in a prayer of thanksgiving, striking thus the dominant note of the day, thanksgiving for the resurrection of Christ and for all that it means, since "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept."

As we began our walk the first hymn was announced, a translation of

> The strife is o'er, the battle done;
> Now is the Victor's triumph won;
> O let the song of praise be sung!
> Alleluia!

Then followed a gazal (Indian song), sung with full hearts and clear voices, recounting the events of the resurrection day. After that the Rev. D. H. M. Kedar read as he walked the wondrous happenings of that first resurrection morning. We sang again,—an Easter carol full of joy and praise followed by translations of other familiar hymns such as "Jesus Lives," and "Jesus Christ is Risen Today."

By this time our faces were turned due eastward, and the dawn was breaking. It was a wonderful moment: behind us the black darkness, and in front the promise and beauty of a new day!

Arrived at the cemetery we gathered in an open space for the second part of our Easter thanksgiving. We were standing now near the graves of our dear ones, and a new note came into our hymns and our prayers. One of our leading laymen read 1 Corinthians 15, with its assurance of the resurrection of and our reunion with our loved ones. Memories and longings crowded into our hearts but the words of the hymns strengthened our faith as we sang:

> On the resurrection morning
> Soul and body meet again;

and yet again:

> For all the saints who from their labors rest.

There was an interval of silence, and then Canon Bannerjee voiced a new note in our thanksgiving prayer,—that our beloved dead shall be raised incorruptible, and that indeed death is swallowed up in victory. To all surely there came fresh comfort as he gave thanks for the burial of Christ, "because by thy rest in the grave thou hast hallowed the graves of all thy saints. Wherever their dear dust sleeps, there is, as it were, thy grave already opened by thy resurrection."

Before reforming our procession the canon referred to the custom among early Christians of special Easter greeting, "Christ is risen indeed!" and suggested that we might in this way greet each other. Then one and another went apart to stand for a moment by the grave of a dear one.

The same order was followed on the return journey, singing and reading alternately; but now the day was fully advanced, and more people were astir. Small wonder that before actually separating at the church door there rang out spontaneously the inspiring cry: "Yisu Masih ki jai

Sorting cocoons at Canton Christian College, so as to preserve only the most perfect, and secure perfect moths for egg-laying. See Page 258.

(Victory to Jesus)!" after which we filed quietly into church for our Easter communion, feeling in truth the presence of the living Christ who was waiting to feed us with the spiritual food of his most precious body and blood.—"Church Missionary Outlook."

THE IRISH OF THE ORIENT.

Burma is administratively a part of India; geographically it is another country, a smaller triangular pendant hanging down from the necklace of the Himalayas into the Indian Ocean, just to the east of the great Indian triangle. And when the life of the Burmese and their customs are considered, thoughts of India are called to mind chiefly because of striking contrasts, says a bulletin of the National Geographic Society.

To the cities have flocked Indians, Chinese, and many Europeans. In Rangoon, a city of 300,000 or more inhabitants, there are more Hindus from India proper than Burmese, and more than half as many Mohammedan Indians. Many shops are in the hands of Armenians. The Burmese of the larger cities, too, have in many ways taken on, at least superficially, the ways of the West.

There is a gaiety and lightness of manner among the Burmese, and a love of bright colored clothing and music, not found among the more sober and somber Indians, which has earned for the Burmese the title, Irish of the Orient. At the same time they are inclined to indolence to a greater extent than the Indians. But at least there is not the keen economic urge to industry in Burma that there is in India proper. In most parts of Burma the soil is rich, the rainfall plentiful, and in some areas more than abundant. The Burmese have long been free from worry over the threat of famine. There is in the country little real poverty, and on the other hand, no great wealth.

The Burma of the Burmese, that is, Lower Burma and the basin of the great Irrawaddy River, is a land of pagodas, the shrines of Buddhism. Thousands upon thousands of these bell-shaped structures, surmounted by gilded spires and tinkling bells, have been built. Many of them have fallen into decay, but others are built each year. They are the symbols of the hold which the Buddhist religion has upon the people of Burma. It is their belief that the surest way of "acquiring merit" and achieving holy rest after death is to erect a pagoda; and very few Burmese who are able

to add to the country's forest of pagoda spires fail to do so.

Because the Burmese are a happy rather than a taciturn people, because the social life of the women is not hedged about with artificial barriers, and because their religion insists that they be temperate, refrain from killing animate things, and that they give alms, it would seem that this portion of the population could be more easily approached and more easily won over to Christianity than almost any other Oriental people. But to Christianize them is no easy task. Missionary work has been carried on among them since the days of Adoniram Judson, who first went to Burma in 1814. Although there has been success among the Burmese members of the population, it has not been nearly so marked as among the Karens. In the main the Burmese have clung to their religion with great tenacity. They have even borrowed modern western methods in an effort to revivify it. A Young Men's Buddhist Association, which seeks to hold the interest of the younger Burmese in the old religion, has become active in recent years.

MISSIONARY METHODS.

In accordance with the recommendation of the Indian Church Board much effort has been put forth to establish and emphasize the importance of a **Sangam Day or Thanksgiving Day** in each of the villages, as well as in the town churches. Small wooden charity boxes that could be easily opened and thus kept from year to year were ordered by the hundred, and a box given to each Christian family.

The Christians in India are very fond of festivals, which are of great value to them. From childhood festivals and pilgrimages have been dear to them. We are therefore bound to provide them with **Christian festivals,** and thus brighten their spirits. Fasting was also given importance among their old religious habits. We seriously consider encouraging the people to observe it carefully in our congregations. The benefit of fasting is yet to be realized by people in our congregations.

Musical services in the open air are found to be one of the most effective means for preaching the gospel in Southern India. Writing to the "Foreign Field," Rev. Chas. H. Monohan says:

"Last year, before I left Madras, I heard a man of high caste tell how his father had been attracted and eventually converted by means of lyrical preaching. He heard the gospel sung one night, and liked it so well that he went for forty successive nights to hear it again and yet again. Thus he opened his heart for the entrance of the Spirit and the Word, and so came home to his heavenly Father."

Now the method is being followed in other centers, and is producing good results.

Recently **a new method in touring** has been tried. After a small group of villages had been inspected, the chairman invited all the teachers with the pastors to spend an afternoon with him for discussion and prayer. Afterwards we discussed the results of the inspection, took up and dealt with problems and discouragements, besides considering plans for the future. Two such meetings were held, and all agreed that they were very beneficial. The value lies in the fact that a few gather together and the indvidual problems are discussed and dealt with.

This coming year we will probably invite the leading Christian men of each village to attend, and strive to get them to take more individual interest in their churches.

The question, **"How did you first come to hear of the gospel?"** often brings answers that reveal the methods that are effective.

"I saw a man selling books, and bought one and read it."

"A certain man in our village talked the doctrine to me."

"I came to market, and dropped into the chapel."

Recently a young man of twenty-two or so was examined. When asked this question he said a certain man read a portion of the Bible to him, and said it was a fine book. The young man took home a Gospel portion and a catechism, and he said:

"As soon as I read it I saw it was the truth, and believed."

He is now a member of the church, and his wife and parents believe, but have not been examined as yet. He can read and seems to have a good deep faith, for he

knows he goes into almost certain persecution for the step he has taken. His family is the first to believe in their village, and that means that they must go through the tribulation that the devil stirs up against those that leave him for the worship of Christ.—W. V. Stinson.

Barrio Extension Work.

There is no phase of Sunday school work in the Philippines more replete with possibilities than that indicated by barrio class extension work. It is a practical carrying out of our Lord's command to "go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in."

The average Filipino municipality covers several square miles. It is something like the New England town. The town centers around the plaza or public square, where is located the municipal building, which corresponds to our Town Hall. In the outlying districts of the municipality are little barrios, or villages, but they belong to the town proper, and are dependent upon the town center for governmental supervision, police protection, mail service, etc. There is very little real country life in the Philippines. People do not live apart. From time immemorial they have grouped themselves together in little villages for purposes of mutual protection and companionship. Filipinos do not like solitude. They go out together in the morning from the villages or barrios to their little farms near by, returning at nightfall.

Protestantism during twenty-three years of activity in the islands has become established in many of the town centers, but there are many of these barrios still unoccupied. This, then, is the harvest field white and ready.

The Disciples Mission at Laoag in the northern part of Luzon has a fine demonstration of the effectiveness of barrio work. In the morning the Central Sunday School meets in their church near the center of the town. The work is well organized. Classes are carefully graded, and there is a fine interest in the lesson study. Teacher training is a part of their regular program. But the real test of the missionary spirit of the school is evidenced on Sunday afternoon, when a score or more of the workers go out two by two to the barrios in the outlying districts of the town. There, in the crudest of conditions and with meager equipment, the seed of the Word is being sown in the minds and hearts of the people. No chapels or churches are available, but the homes of the people or the shade of the trees furnish the places where the people come together to sing the songs they have learned to love, and to hear the message of the story that never grows old.

Sunday Schools in Egypt.

It was said in olden times that the Sunday school is the child of the church, but now we may say the Sunday school is the mother of the church. We have found that it is much easier to open a Sunday school among the children and young people of the Coptic church, and even among the Moslems, than it is to start an evangelical preaching service for adults. Often such schools have resulted in creating day schools and living, well organized churches. We know many villages which were opened to the gospel through the Sunday school, while they were shut in the face of evangelists.

The Sunday school movement in Egypt has begun to tear away the robes of sectarianism, because this movement has called for unity among Christian bodies. The Coptic and Armenian churches are following in the steps of the evangelical Sunday school, and are seeking and finding light from her. Many Moslem fathers, after they have seen the effect of the Sunday school in straightening up the character of their children, have dispelled their long-existing fear and suspicion of the church. Within the evangelical church it is scarcely possible to give an adequate description of the power and usefulness of the Sunday school. The evangelical pastors have found how greatly the Sunday school has increased the religious knowledge of their young people, and how greatly it has educated their characters. So these pastors are now accepting into church membership boys and girls of twelve and upwards.

But there is yet a vast field of work before the Sunday school in Egypt, both among the schools and the street children. The day school children are 330,000, and the street children number about 1,750,000. Of all these only 25,000 are in the Sunday school.

Work among street children is a movement only three years old, begun as an ex-

periment in two cities. The results have been remarkably good. The change in the language, character and Bible knowledge of these neglected children of the poor has been very marked. The street children of Egypt are the outcasts, the bootblacks, the waifs who collect cigarette stubs from the sidewalks, the beggars, the unemployed, the pickpockets. Such vagabonds are too many in Egypt, owing to the polygamy and ignorance and poverty of the lower classes. Utter inattention on the part of the parents leaves these children to do what they like. Often this results in forming criminal gangs.

Such are collected on Sunday mornings, and are taught, in all simplicity, lessons on physical and moral cleanliness. Most of the boys are Mohammedans, and they hear for the first time the story of the life of Christ. A text is usually learned, and a song and a simple prayer. Picture cards are welcomed with vehement enthusiasm. These ragged children are usually gathered in an alley between large buildings. Sometimes a schoolyard or a private house is secured. When a number continue to come weekly a room is hired. Often such a class develops into a preaching center, and a day school is added. In villages the waifs and children of Moslem families are with the regular Sunday school students, either in special classes or mingled with the church children. —Metry S. DeWairy.

Improving the Silk Industry in South China.

The production of raw silk is the largest single industry in South China. At least 40 per cent of her exports are raw silk, and fully as much is used locally as is exported. Canton is the center of this trade.

Canton silk has peculiar qualities of softness and fineness and luster, which fit it preëminently for manufacturing velvets and crêpes. The demand for the silk is very great, especially in America. In 1921, 48,057 bales of Canton silk came to America, and only 13,509 went to Europe. But disease among the silk worms has lowered the quality of the thread, and has caused heavy losses to many farmers. Some entire villages have gone out of the silk worm business because they could not make it pay to rear diseased silk worms. The poor methods of unwinding in the filatures has added to the faults in the raw silk. If the disease in the silk worms can be eliminated the present silk area in South China will produce from four to five times as much silk as at present, and of much better quality. The Canton worm is eminently adapted to tropical conditions, and with its six or seven crops each year can show quick returns for small efforts at improvement.

The Canton Christian College four years ago, realizing the conditions into which the industry had sunk, began to study how improvements could be brought about. To assist the college in its work, two buildings were given for sericulture, one for general work by the Silk Association of America and a second for a dormitory for a sericultural school by Mr. Marcus Frieder.

For two years the college experimented and made observations before it was ready to begin active work. It was soon found that the production of disease-free silk worm eggs for the farmers was the first and most fundamental step to be taken in reorganizing the industry. By this time a strain of disease-free worms had been produced, with worms 25 per cent larger than those reared by the farmers, and cocoons two to three times as heavy with silk.

The college has not stopped here, but has been training natives in the newer scientific methods of handling silk worms and producing disease-free eggs. Some of these men have been apprentices, others have entered a six months' course of intensive instruction consisting of both lectures and practice. Some of these men have been retained for the expansion of the work, the others are demonstrating in their home villages what better methods will do in giving bigger crops of cocoons. The college hopes soon to be able to erect model silk worm rearing-houses at various strategic centers, where better methods of handling silk worms can be demonstrated to the farmers, who are mostly illiterate. Some of the mission boards are arranging to enter this phase of the work, and to erect and operate model rearing-houses under the college supervision.

The methods of unwinding the cocoons in the filatures must also be carefully studied, and the best methods found and taught to the workers. Mulberry cultivation and marketing must also be improved. Purely

Silkworms feeding in a basket.

scientific research and experimentation will result in other practical improvements.

An illustrated pamphlet of 32 pages, giving fuller information about this interesting situation in one of the mission areas in which Americans are specially concerned, has been prepared by Professor C. W. Howard, head of the Department of Sericulture, in Canton Christian College, and can be secured by addressing him at 156 Fifth Avenue, New York City. Prof. Howard also has lectures of general interest, illustrated by stereopticon views, which he has given at Northfield and other points. It is easy to believe that such practical benefits give a unique standing to this Christian college, and open many villages to the preaching of the gospel.

A Million Trees at a Penny Apiece.

"How, in God's name, could such a catastrophe be prevented!"

The words in an awed tone came from the lips of a missionary as he wandered among the starving thousands of human beings about the city of Nanking, China, a few years ago.

The absence of trees on China's barren hills he found to be one of the main causes of the awful famines.

The upshot of this man's idea was the College of Agriculture and Forestry of Nanking University. It was established in 1914 as a measure of permanent famine relief. The college is engaged in a stupendous task which in its essence is famine prevention. Through it Nanking Union University aims to reconstruct, so far as lies in its power, the tragically faulty economic system of North China. Simply stated, it is educating the Chinese rural population of that section in the need and means of reforestation and in the methods of better agriculture. Practically eighty-five per cent of the Chinese people are rural and are more or less agricultural in occupation, so the extent of the problem and its immense results—once solved—can be readily understood.

Demonstration plots on which experimental crops are raised and seedlings produced cover one hundred and forty acres of land adjoining the university campus. There is now in operation a nursery of over 1,000,000 trees, producing millions of seedlings and tons of seeds at cost prices to farmers, infant native nurseries and government stations in North China. Every means of promoting interest in the planting of trees is taken advantage of by the faculty and student body of the Forestry Department. At country fairs demonstrations are held before tens of thousands of Chinese

farmers. At a single fair 2000 farmers eagerly availed themselves of these lessons. Millions of pages of literature on forestry and improved methods of agriculture have been distributed.

It has been found that trees for China cost only one cent each, as proved by one of the graduates of Nanking School of Forestry, who is overseer of the forest plantations for the Peng Ko-chung Railway. He produced 1,000,000 seedlings at a total cost of $10,000. A penny a tree! At that rate China's naked hills ought to be clothed in a short time.—Henry Clay Foster.

HOW I BECAME A MISSIONARY.

A. F. Robb.

The Sunday school scholars gathered in the church to hear the returned missionary tell of his work. He closed his story with the appeal:

"I hope some of the boys and girls here will go out some day to tell the heathen boys and girls about Jesus."

A boy of ten, sitting with his class in a front gallery seat, said in his heart:

"I will!"

It was God's call, but the boy's religion was yet but a shallow thing, and his decision a childish one. Three years later he heard a call to repentance which deeply impressed him. This led to a surrender of his life to God, which was followed later by assurance of forgiveness and delight in God's Word, worship and service. From this time on his aim in life was to be a missionary.

When he finished high school the way to college was not open, so he went to work in a store, first as errand boy, then as mechanic, and later as bookkeeper. He has proved the truth of his pastor's words, "These years may be as useful to you as a college course, for in a missionary's life it is especially true that, as Lew Wallace says, 'beyond question every experience in life is serviceable.'"

Four years later, having saved some money, the boy was ready to continue his studies. His employer urged him to remain with him, and buy him out when he got ready to retire. So the young man faced the question as to whether it was God's will for him to go as a missionary or to make money to send others as missionaries. After earnest prayer and consideration he decided again that God wanted his life, and not merely his money, in the foreign field.

The money he had made took him through college and seminary. While in seminary he received his call to Korea through the appeal sent by Elder San (now pastor) to the Canadian Presbyterian Church after the death of our pioneer missionary, MacKenzie. Thus, after three years of happy work in a home mission field the Foreign Mission Board sent him to Korea.

Twenty-one years have gone by since then, and once again he, the writer, gives thanks for the privilege of being a missionary in this land of opportunity.

I wish to express in writing my grateful thanks for the Record of Christian Work. It is of untold blessing to us here, as we are shut away from all Christian fellowship and preaching on this dark Kru coast. Our souls are fed with the fine messages and the inspiration that comes by reading the magazine monthly. We revel in the addresses contained in the Record.

We need your prayers much for us here, as we have a hard struggle to keep the pure and simple gospel ever before our people, but the work grows in spite of drawbacks. Christ is mighty to save in this dark land! —Rev. Walter B. Williams, Nana Kru M. E. Mission, West Coast Africa.

For the Spread of Christ's Kingdom.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who, in thy goodness hast caused the light of the gospel to shine in our land, extend thy mercy, we beseech thee, to the nations of the world that still walk in darkness! Enlighten the Moslems with the knowledge of thy truth, and grant that the gospel of salvation may be made known in all lands, that the heart of the peoples may be turned unto thee. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

—Scottish Book of Common Prayer.

THE FAREWELL: A DREAM IN NEW YORK.

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea. . . . . And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things have passed away. And there shall be no more curse. . . . . And there shall be no night there. Revelation 21. 1-4; 22. 3-5.

The great Cathedral on the hill
  Looms dark against the western sky,
And through the drowsy summer night
  Pale dreams with languid eyes drift by.
The city's mighty heart beats low,
  Its many voices die away.
Silence!—and then another world
  Orbs slowly into perfect day.

No sounds articulate could tell
  The wonders of that unknown land,
Or, if they could, 'twere useless still,—
  No mortal mind could understand.
But ere the glory quite o'erflowed
  The darkness with its living ray,
Through myriad radiant forms of light
  Seven sister shadows took their way.

. . . . . .

Sea.

The first was tall, and wondrous fair,
  And moved along with rhythmic grace;
Anemones, and pearls, adorned
  The ruthless beauty of her face:
But in the hand that waved farewell
  Twined a symbolic rosary
Of tangled hair, and severed hearts.
  She passed,—"and there was no more sea"!

Death.

The next came on with footsteps slow,
  As to a sound of passing bells,
And on her drooping head she wore
  A crown of faded immortelles.
The palm she raised to wave adieu
  Changed to a withered cypress wreath.
O grave, now is thy victory
  Vanquished! And there was no more death!

Sorrow.

Now one with lips that soundless moved,
  And eyes that something missing sought,
Passing, as all things mortal pass.
  Her hands had deeds immortal wrought,
And fadeless lilies bloomed around
  Her footsteps to the silent shore:
But she must join her sister shades,
  And sorrow cease for evermore!

Crying.

Then came one, born in Paradise
  What time the primal mandate fell,
And flaming swords turned every way:
  Tears marked that first, this last farewell.
Around her played a various light,
  Like rainbow hues on wave-tost spray:
Then, as she vanished like a mist,
  God wiped the latest tears away!

Pain.

A pang shot through the shuddering air
  As one in wild delirium came;
A serpent writhed above her heart,
  With ruby eyes, and tongue of flame;
A voice of stern command rang out:
  "Migrant from hell, go back again!"
Then, wildly shrieking last farewells,
  She fled,—"and there was no more pain"!

Curse.

Then came one with a burning brand,
  And thorns and briars pierced her breast;
But blooms of fragrant irides
  Shed rays of hope, and promised rest.
ONE quenched the brand, and with the thorns,
  Whose spines and blossoms red were wet
With dews of dark Gethsemane,
  He wove himself a coronet!

Night.

Oldest and last, imperial Night
  Those ever-brightening courts swept through;
Proudest of all the sister shades,
  Star-crowned, and diamonded with dew.
She passed. Her trailing sable robes
  Paled in the all-encircling light,
But none could tell just whence it came,
  That last farewell, that last good night!

. . . . . .

As one by one the shadows passed
  A light intenser seemed to fill
That sphere immense, until it left
  No place for one,—a shadow still.

Then, orbing to the west again,
As back familiar features come,
It lessened slowly, till it sank,
A star, behind the mighty dome.

The great Cathedral on the hill,
So stately in the full moon's beams,
Though built to last a thousand years,
Is less substantial than such dreams.
Earth's shadow trails the fields of space,
But heaven's fair radiance goes before,
For God is light,—and light endures
For evermore! For evermore!

—Edwin Botham.

THE CROSS OF CHRIST: LIFE'S ETERNAL CENTER.

Rev. Principal W. M. Clow, D. D.*

Every life has its center, its focus of interest and desire, from which its thought and action are determined.

With many this center is unrealized. There is no conscious reference to it, and their lives, in consequence, have no definite aims, pursue no steadfast path, and fail in order and progress. Yet behind their daily life there is some aim, some desire, or it may be some dumb instinct, which is ruling and determining. It may be merely a love of pleasure, or the indulgence of a passion, or even the resolve to eat the fat and drink the sweet of life.

With many more, in this age with its besetting sin of materialism, the center of their thought and desire and motive is only too clear. The gratification of some sensuous, if not sensual, appetite, or an undisguised love of gain, or the prosecution of an earthly ambition, reveals what is throbbing at the center of their being. John drew their portrait when he wrote of those who were under the power of the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

To the man who has heard the voice of Christ such a center for life has been left behind. His center has become the cross.

The cross is not the center, ultimate and final, of our faith and our hope. That center is God, and God's kingdom among men. The center of every man's life can be discerned by himself at least in his prayers. So the summit and consummation of Christian prayer is always and only in the everlasting cry, "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come." But the fact and the truth which point out the way in which the great name can be hallowed, the eternal kingdom shall come, and the will of God be known and be done, is the fact and truth of the cross. To Christian thought the cross is not merely an event in time. It was set up in the very heart of God from before the foundation of the world. It still stands, although long ago its wood and its nails have passed under the law of decay, as clearly open to men's vision as it was to those who looked up and saw the crucified One upon it. It will not pass away even when time shall be no more. In heaven itself men will find the cross central in its revelation and power.

One of the ruling and inspiring truths which moved Martin Luther was his assurance that men know God fully and clearly only as the God of redemption. He was not unmindful that in the dim ages of the past men sought after God if haply they might find him. They became somewhat assured of him through the revelation of nature. The heavens declared the glory of God. They learned his laws and his purpose in history, and realized that he was a God of righteousness, who hated iniquity, and called on men to keep his unalterable commandments. They passed into a fuller knowledge in their experience when they became assured that he was a God of love and pity, even a Saviour. But it was not until, as Luther affirmed, they realized God to be the great redeemer, that they knew him and understood his ways. So it is in the cross of Jesus Christ that the whole truth of God's desire and purpose, of God's love and pity, of God's grace and forgiveness is expressed, and therefore the cross is life's center for every Christian heart, here

* Principal Clow, of the Free Church College of Glasgow, wields a wide influence in the churches of Scotland, and much further afield. A man of deep spirituality, whose messages bear the impress of close communion with the Unseen, he is at the same time an acknowledged leader in the field of the church's social tasks. Evangelical themes as dealt with by him are never lifeless nor remote from the world's clamant needs. This article is characteristic of his entire notable ministry.

and now, and for evermore. There men become assured of God, and of God's will, and of God's passion for their souls. There they find the law of their lives, and there they find the secret of an unfaltering and glad obedience.

Now, the entering into a life which shall make the cross its center, and the continuing in its loyalties with a consequent peace and joy, can be marked in certain phases. These phases can be indicated here only in outline.

At the very beginning there is that first realization of the central cross in the hour of conversion.

We must not narrow the experience of conversion by any rigid thought as to what it must mean. We are all so different in temperament, in knowledge, in past training, and even in character, that no two men ever walk quite in the same way, although all pass along the one high and upward road. Yet whatever may be the details of the experience, there must be a time when the soul centers its thought upon the cross. Bunyan, with his unerring imagination and true insight, makes the Christian life really begin only when Christian stands below the cross and the burden falls off his back. Up to that time he has had his face set toward the heavenly city, but his feet have not stepped out on the way. Thereafter the cross stands securely as the center of his faith and peace and joy. So to all time a true and enriching experience will focus on the cross.

One despairing man may come who has made his bed in hell, to find the furies of vengeance haunting him in the agonies of his flesh and the anguish of his spirit. In a great freedom he beholds the cross, and begins to walk in newness of life.

Another may have paid heed to the counsels of the wise, kept his life clean from open and wilful disobediences, and observed the customs of the faith with diligence and decorum. But the cross has not been central in his life. Only in that hour when he awakes to the poverty of the dull and tepid and feeble loyalty of his soul, because he sees the love and grace of God redeeming him in the cross, does the thrill of faith pass through him, and he finds that all things in life and in death have been made new.

Another, often young and unstained, is led, as one of the lambs of the flock, into the fold of the Good Shepherd by the call of his voice. But there comes a day when the high seriousness of life dawns upon him, the strength of keen temptations assails him, and the glorious and splendid height of the moral and spiritual demands of Christ is realized. Then he turns to the cross to find himself brought into that new covenant which is not only forgiveness, but communion with his Redeemer. For him also there stands central the sacrifice of "the green hill far away."

This realization is often the vivid and unforgettable experience of life, but it must be renewed in the stress and under the burden of all our days.

As one grows older life becomes more full of mystery. There are strange happenings, shadowing limitations, heavy trials, and fiercer temptations. Life becomes full, not only of stress and of burden, not only of sorrow and of trial, but of dark and difficult and inexplicable experiences. Poverty, disappointment in pure and simple hopes, loneliness as our need of fellowship grows the greater, humbling mortifications, and again some crucifying shame, make life a chill and somber pilgrimage. Then, as it so often happens, faith falters, and even fails. Men and women grow bitter and hopeless. Their mouths are filled with murmurings, and their secret thoughts become rebellious against both God and man. Where in the world is there healing for such spiritual sickness? It is found only by those who have centered upon the cross. They hear a voice speaking from it: "The disciple is not above his Master. It is enough that the disciple be as his Lord." In the cross they find not merely the explanation and interpretation of their lives, they find not merely the strangely re-nerving assurance that they are walking in the way that the Master went: they find the revelation of the mind and will and the love and the purpose of God, and the cross becomes their law and their motive and their means of exaltation. A new strength is given to their will, a new peace to their hearts, and a new wisdom to all they say and do.

There is one especial hour from which

nowadays men seem too willing to turn away their eyes: that is the hour of death. Yet in their secret hearts many are wistful about that hour, and about what lies beyond. It is an hour that many pass through, held and overcome by the torture of their pain, with clouded mind and distracted heart. It is an hour when even a believing heart is tempted to think that life may be all, and that there is no Father's home. But then comes the potent and assuring thought that in Christ's cross, and in the eternal love it manifested and all the redemption it wrought out, there is to be found the undeniable proof of a purpose and a passion for men's souls that will not let them go out into the utter darkness of nevermore.

That is finely touched for us in the story of Henry Drummond's last hours. He knew that he was dying. He was leaving a life which was full of charm, and a world in which he played a great part. He was leaving men who had learned to wait upon his words, and friends who loved him and paid him reverence. He was dying in a strange torture, but he still kept his old smile, and was swift with his apt word. He still allowed men to grasp his hand, though it cost him a spasm of pain. Whence did he draw his courage, his patience, his hope? The cross had been the inner motive of his life, and it was still central in his death. In his dying hour a friend played softly some of his cherished hymns. He listened in silence. At last there was sung, to a simple melody, the Puritan paraphrase "I'm Not Ashamed to Own My Lord."

It was his decisive hour, and he joined softly in the words. When the song ceased he said:

"There is nothing to beat that!"

The man who can go back and enter into the meaning of the cross which has been central in his life will find it central in his death. The resurrection from the dead becomes a sure certainty to the man who has realized why Jesus died and rose again.

But the cross is an eternal center, and this life is not all. The New Testament is more richly strewn with that truth than some realize, but in the Book of Revelation, where the writer was intent on the comforting and strengthening of the persecuted believers who were passing through a tribulation in which faith and hope were more difficult than we can realize, when there sometimes seemed to be no God in heaven, he goes back continually on the fact and truth of the cross. His absorbing name for Jesus, set in his pages no less than seven-and-thirty times, is "the Lamb that was slain." His conception of earth and its times, and of the life of Christ upon it, was conditioned and almost determined by the thought that Jesus died upon the cross. One of the most significant incidents is that in which the Lamb who was slain takes the book that no one could open, and with hands marked by the print of the nails, breaks its seal. The meaning of that symbolic act is simply this, that all God's dealing with men, all his great purpose of grace, all his passion of love, and all his will in the ages to come, can be discerned and understood in the sacrifice made by the Lamb. To nothing else will those who have come through great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, go back in such constant and adoring gratitude as to Calvary and its cross!

Men in Queer Places.

A Preacher in a Submarine.
An Apostle in a Basket.
A Prime Minister in a Noose.
A King "among the Stuff."
Two Spies in a Roof.
A Soldier in a Pit.
Two Evangelists in the Stocks.
Three Young Men in a Furnace.
A Prophet in an Aeroplane.
A Tax-gatherer in a Tree.
A Backslider in a Sieve.
A Son among the Hogs.
An Uncrowned Monarch in a Cave.
A Discouraged Man under a Juniper.
A Great Warrior in a Small Place.

—Pastor F. E. Marsh.

Frederick W. H. Myers was once approached with this question:

"If you could ask the Sphinx one question, and one only, what would that question be?"

After a moment's thought he replied: "If I could ask the Sphinx one question, and one only, and hope for answer, I think the question would be this, Is the universe friendly?"

"Out of sight stood, ready for action, a body of Indian cavalry."

HOLY WEEK IN JERUSALEM: THE FESTIVALS OF THREE GREAT RELIGIONS.

W. P. Livingstone.

Nowhere in the world can be witnessed so extraordinary a conjunction of religious ceremonies as in Jerusalem during what is termed Holy Week. How one regards these depends very much on his training. They may be thought of as—in the phrase of an American tourist,—"very fine shows," or as presenting a perfect orgy of superstition, or as witnessing most movingly to the ineradicable spiritual instincts in human nature. Readers may judge for themselves from the following brief descriptions of some of the events that kept the adherents of three religions in a ferment of emotion during the Easter season of 1922.

The Jewish Passover.

The Jewish Passover was celebrated during these days, and, like the Christian and Moslem festivals, drew pilgrims from every quarter of the globe. The Jews have not yet come to their own in Jerusalem, and their synagogues are situated in the slummiest part of the city. The principal building, by no means handsome, was entered through an archway guarded by police. A conspicuous object was a large wall-painting representing trees "by the rivers of Babylon," from the branches of which hung harps, trumpets, and other instruments. Sir Herbert Samuel attended this synagogue when he arrived as high commissioner, and was the reader for the day, and it was noted as a curious coincidence that the passage he first read was, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people! Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem!"

On the occasion of my visit most of the prominent Jews of the city were there, along with representatives of the race from far and near. On my left sat a wealthy Jew from London, on my right a rough backwoodsman from the Antipodes, in front, in a blue cloak and fur cap, a merchant from Galicia. The reader was a famous European cantor.

There was no seemly unison in the repetition of the prayers. Each man chanted them as he thought fit, swaying his body the while: at the stronger invocations raising his voice to a passionate cry, or at some sad passage dropping it to an almost inaudible wail. A passing stranger might have imagined he was listening to the menacing roar of a mob; in reality the congregation was intoning in the ancient tongue beautiful psalms and petitions that are familiar to every Christian ear.

A Jewish friend whispered to me in effect: "To you who are unacquainted with the Hebrew language, what you are hearing and seeing may seem formal and wearisome.

To us it is profoundly significant and touching. Countless memories rise before us, of hallowed associations in patriarchal ages, of fierce persecutions and constant emigrations and wanderings, of scenes of terrible cruelty and suffering, and of an immemorial unity and integrity of belief maintained through all circumstances, under all skies, and in all ages without intermission. And we are here today, men of all nations, acknowledging our faults and pleading for restoration to the home of our fathers that we may worship God in peace—not without hope. Thanks be to him, not without hope!"

That night in the Jewish hotel a company sat, or rather leant and reclined, at a long, tastefully-decorated table, for the Seder service. This was the fare:

Egg. Shankbone.
Bitter Herbs.
Parsley. Haroseth.
Cress.

—each item reminding those present of the rigorous experiences of the race in the past. Every year, in every land, for centuries, the same supper has been eaten and the same pathetic longing has been uttered:

"This year we celebrate it here, but in the year to come we hope to celebrate it in the land of Israel. This year we are as slaves, next year we shall be freemen in the land of Israel."

The Greek Orthodox Celebration.

All sections of the Christian community have their celebrations and processions centering in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

The strangest of these is the "miracle" of the holy fire, one of the festivals of the Greek Church. On Good Friday night people began to gather in the rotunda of the Sepulcher, chiefly women, many of them with babies, in order to obtain a good position for the ceremony at noon next day. Early on Saturday the building was a seething mass of humanity, so solidly wedged that it was with the utmost difficulty the officers and men of the Palestinian police could keep a narrow passage free. The openings of the ambulatory, tier above tier, and the galleries right up to the dome, were packed. Under one of the arches on the first storey on temporary planks the writer sat facing the oval aperture in the chapel from which the fire was to issue.

Below was an agitated sea of red fezzes and white turbans. Groups of men here and there were chanting and clapping hands under the direction of excited individuals, who, shoulder high, beat time with sticks. One was shouting in Arabic, "Jesus is our Messiah! The Moslems are our brothers! The Jews are our dogs!"—a sentiment which elicited roars of appreciation. Altercations were constantly occurring between rival parties and between the police and the leaders of the gangs, who moved about by walking on the heads and shoulders of the crowd. Immediately below, two women started to fight one another, and had to be dragged apart. The atmosphere seemed charged with a sort of emotional fury.

Towards noon a procession of banners appeared, followed by black-hooded priests, bishops in flowered robes, and the gorgeous figure of the white-haired patriarch, clad in white brocade and resplendent with jewels. Three times the chapel was circled, and then the patriarch entered the holy place, and for a quarter of an hour there was a suspense which the crowd found almost insupportable. A priest took up his place at the oval window, and suddenly he raised his hand, and the vast assemblage thrilled with expectation. Then came a flash of fire, the priest rushed down a narrow lane with a bunch of lighted tapers in his hand, and disappeared, and the crowd surged towards the window in uncontrollable excitement. The wildest disorder followed: men and women struggled to get their candles lit at the opening, and for a time the scene baffles description.

Gradually the circle of lighted candles extended. Every one was eager to pass on the flame. Bunches of tapers were pushed up to the first gallery, and then handed on to those above, while others, tied to cord, were let down from the dome, lit by the nearest person, and drawn up again. In a marvelously short time the rotunda was ablaze with wavering lights. Filled with religious ecstasy, the people passed their hands through the fire and laved their faces with the flame, for to them it was real fire from heaven.

The processions began again, Armenians,

An Easter festival of the Latins is the "Washing of the Feet," at the entrance to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. The ceremony is witnessed by dense crowds.

Copts, and Syrians taking their part in the day's ceremony, the people pressing near to receive a blessing for themselves or their children, and kissing the garments of the priests. But the atmosphere was so heavy with the fumes from the candles that one was glad to escape. At the entrance sat the Moslem guardians of the holy sepulcher. Was it fancy that on their faces one saw a smile of contempt?

A Protestant Service.

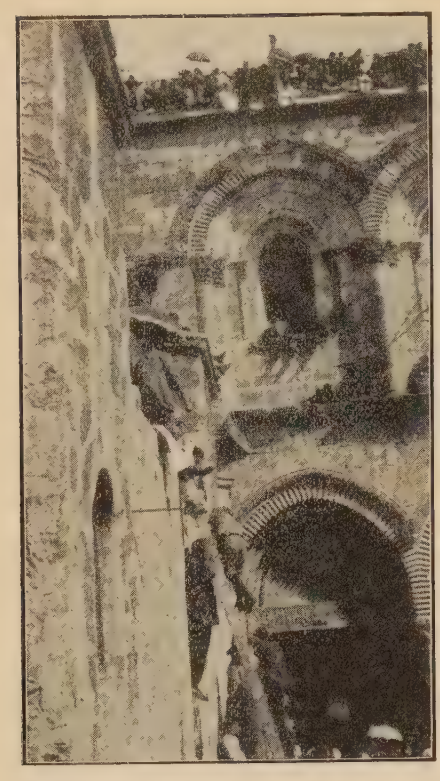
On the evening of Good Friday a solitary light shone from the slope of the Mount of Olives, and along the quiet roads people from Jerusalem were making their way towards it. One thought at first that it was in the Garden of Gethsemane, but that secluded spot was dark and silent, though shadowy figures moved here and there, and in front of the ancient olive tree under which, pious tradition asserts, Christ stood on the night of his agony, the forms of Franciscan friars and of women kneeling in prayer could be seen. The light was on the balcony of the Russian Church of St. Mary Magdalene just above, and here a Protestant service was being held. The wide staircase was thronged and impassable, and one wandered into the recesses of the garden, occupied only by an individual here and there in the attitude of prayer or meditation.

A voice came distinctly through the stillness, reading, "Then cometh Jesus unto a place called Gethsemane,"—and on to the end. Then the gathering sang, "'Twas on That Night," and a soloist followed with "Alone," his clear, penetrating voice sounding across the wide gulf and returning in a faint echo. The moon rose over the Mount of Olives, flooding the valley, revealing the olive and cypress trees, and illuminating the long, steep wall surmounted by the Mosque of Omar, that stately symbol of a religion which overcame and dominated the Christian faith. A short address was given, and the service closed with "Abide with Me." Many lingered afterwards in the shadows, gazing in reflective mood across to the city. From below rose the sound of chanting: the Franciscans also in their own garden were bearing on their hearts the remembrance of that tragic night long ago.

A Moslem Festival.

To counterbalance the Christian celebrations the Moslems have instituted the festival of Nebi Musa, or pilgrimage to the so-called tomb of Moses on the road to Jericho. Multitudes of Arabs attend the prayers at the Mosque of Omar and proceed to Nebi Musa, and their return in procession forms one of the most remarkable events of the week.

All the slopes between the city and the Mount of Olives were thronged with spectators clothed in every variety of gay costume. One hill-side was given over to women, who all carried parasols, and was a vast flame of variegated color. The



So great is the crush at the ceremony of "Washing the Feet" that people descend from the roofs by means of ladders.

gathering had all the features of a fair: gigantic revolving wheels provided joy-rides, water-sellers with clashing cymbals moved noisily along, venders of Oriental sweets lined the paths. And over the crest of the hillock, out of sight, stood, ready for action, a body of Indian cavalry and a number of armored cars.

Towards noon the booming of cannon under the walls of the Mosque of Omar signalled the approach of the pilgrims. They came round the white road from Bethany, marching with banners and flags, a broad stream of color, and filed past the wall of Gethsemane on which I sat. Mounted police headed the procession, and lined it at short intervals. It moved slowly. Bands played, and every few yards came a circle of dancers who kept up a continual chanting and clapping of hands, incited by a strenuous individual in the center who was occasionally raised shoulder high. Arab schoolboys and boy scouts with bands had their place. Above the tumult of the procession came at intervals the boom of cannon.

As the endless band of color moved up towards St. Stephen's Gate, a sudden shock seemed to agitate the vast gathering, and in a moment, by a common impulse, it broke and scattered in confusion: men and women rushed frantically hither and thither, scrambling over walls and pelting down the roadway as if for dear life. Then as swiftly the panic ceased, the procession reformed, and the spectators settled back into their places. It seemed that a mounted policeman had been urging a quicker pace, and that a stone had been thrown; in the state of tension which always prevails on such occasions, this was sufficient to cause a stampede.

One looked down from the high wall on the wild and garish scene, and then turned and looked down on the other side. Here was the Garden of Gethsemane asleep in peace in the sunshine, not a leaf stirring, not a movement disturbing its quiet beauty.

The Memorial of Christ.

Satiated with the sight of imposing processions and ceremonies, lighted altars, gorgeous decorations and priceless jewels, a score of men and women visitors from many countries came together on Easter Sunday night in an upper room of a Jerusalem hotel: it was the office of the proprietor, and he was a Jew. We were mostly strangers to one another, but we felt drawn instinctively by the ties of Christian fellowship.

"Somewhere in this city, in some upper room near us," said Dr. Miller, from Washington, "Christ instituted a memorial of himself, and it is meet that we, his disciples, should commemorate him this night."

He read the familiar passage; and another American, Dr. Macafee, from Berkeley, California, prayed, very simply. Unleavened bread, supplied by the hotel proprietor, and the red wine of the country were handed round. Dr. Miller said a few words, also very simple and direct, and concluded by remarking that although the morrow would find them scattered, and they would never meet again on earth, they would again gather round Christ's table in his kingdom.

After the benediction all sat quiet for a

Moslem crowd waiting for the return of the pilgrims. Mount of Olives in the background; the lowest clump of cypresses marks the Garden of Gethsemane; the road from Bethany is just below it.

while, then some one started softly, "Just As I Am." A single verse was sung. This was followed by a verse each from other hymns.

The strains of the orchestra and the babel of voices outside did not destroy the moving effect of the little service, and when one slipped out and melted again into the common life of the world, it was with a feeling that he had come from the very presence of Christ.

A visit to Palestine fills one with profound gratitude that Christianity is not a religion attached to any country or to any particular spot. Sitting by the well of Samaria and looking up to Mount Gerizim, where preparations were being made for the sacrifice of the seven white lambs, one recalled, with immeasurable relief and thankfulness, what Christ said at the same spot:

"Ye shall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father: the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth."

THE NATURE OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE.*

Rev. Harris E. Kirk, D. D.

If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God. John 7. 17.

In these words Jesus speaks clearly about a question to which most of us would like a plain answer, although our ability to understand the answer will depend upon willingness to put our minds to it. These words were called out by an inquiry made of Jesus by the Pharisees, who were unable to resist the power of his teaching. They said, "Where did this man get his knowledge of God, since it is clear he was not educated in our schools?" Jesus replied in substance, "I obtained it from my disposition to do my Father's will, and the way is open to all earnest minds. If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God." That is to say, if our disposition be right, we shall be able to obtain valid knowledge of God and the way of life.

Every man at some stage of his life wants this very thing. How can we be sure of

* Northfield League Midwinter Conference, January 1923.

God? Is our knowledge, admittedly at all times imperfect, still a valid knowledge? How may we reach those durable persuasions which in the hour of life or death shall give us a confident assurance that we are the children of God, that what we have committed unto him against that day is safe?

Let me attempt to answer this question, and set before you what seems to be the nature of religious knowledge.

The general drift of this saying is that a man's disposition, his moral attitude toward life generally, will determine his apprehension of the mind of God. If his disposition is wrong, he can never reach assurance about any spiritual reality; if his disposition is right, it will lead him into ever increasing light and confidence. If the eye be single the whole body shall be full of light, but if the eye be evil, that is, cursed with moral duplicity, then the whole body shall be full of darkness. Only the pure in heart see God. If we are willing to become disciples of Jesus we shall know the truth, and the truth shall make us free. These are the Biblical conditions on which God offers valid religious knowledge.

The need for a reasonable conception of religious beliefs arises when we are confronted with a certain choice. We begin to be Christians under the influence of home and church. We profess beliefs about Christ before we are able clearly to think about them. But eventually the question is bound to arise, Shall we continue to believe what we profess because we have been told to believe it, or shall we believe it because we are convinced that it is true? This is a perfectly normal experience, for our permanent hold on any belief will depend upon our choice of it because it is true. If we should entertain a reasonable doubt about it, no matter how earnestly it be urged upon us, we shall fail to realize its power, and go halting and stumbling all our lives.

The real danger, let me insist upon it, to our religious peace does not come from raising the question, but in refusing the serious and patient demands required to give it a fitting answer. That is why there is so much talk about doubt that is not doubt at all. It is a very grave moment when this question rises. It calls for thorough treatment, for by this method alone can a man confirm his religious possessions. Yet many who are too indolent mentally or too shallow morally draw back from it, turn from Christ and the church, and spend the rest of their lives trying to give to a very unoriginal phase of human weakness the aspect of rationality. No man who has known the agony of doubt has ever professed to be proud of the experience, for doubt is both moral and spiritual weakness, and has been acknowledged to be such by every noble mind.

Yet doubt need not be the outcome of such a necessary mental process, but on the contrary it should lead to a stronger faith. The right way to meet such mental experiences is boldly to accept the challenge of life. We must believe that our Lord wants us to raise this question; to take our life seriously enough to insist that our beliefs shall rest upon truth, and that those who earnestly seek for the truth shall find it. Hence Jesus says, First of all consider your disposition. What is your attitude toward life as a whole? Are you willing to do God's will as you at present understand it? If so, you will come to know more of him, and as your knowledge is felt to be valid it will bring you into permanent relations with the eternal interests of life.

Our inquiry then is this: What is the nature of the knowledge that Jesus promises we shall gain from a right disposition towards God's will?

What is knowledge of any sort? It is not and never can be completely to know everything that can be known about anything, but sufficient information about a thing to justify us in acting as if it were true. All knowledge is relative. It is relative to your personal point of view, it is also relative to your opportunities and degree of comprehension. Complete knowledge of anything is impossible. Neither is it necessary; for the end of knowledge is action. Its reason for being is to serve life, to keep life in motion, and to direct it towards right ends. And knowledge of any kind, although it is admittedly partial knowledge, is valid if it gives direction and movement to the stream of life, simply because it is based upon the belief that one has enough information about a thing to justify one in acting as if it were true. From a religious point of view there is just as much danger in

trying to believe or know too much as there is in trying to know and believe too little. All knowledge exists to keep us in motion; religious knowledge exists to keep us in motion toward the will and purposes of God, and whatever does this is valid, is real knowledge.

I.

Belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour has been historically and experimentally demonstrated to be the most powerful force to keep the stream of human life moving towards the will and purposes of God. In the face of life's gravest necessities it has always justified men in acting as if it were true, and willingness to act upon it has afforded the strongest possible confirmation of its truth: therefore I affirm with the utmost confidence that faith in Jesus Christ is a valid form of knowledge. In the wider sphere of its influence it is as valid for life as are the demonstrations of science or of philosophy in their more restricted domains of influence.

Of course this affirmation has often been questioned. It is denied, for example, by what is loosely called modern rationalism, and on the most absurd grounds. Modern rationalism as a rule is not rationalism at all, but impressionism. Rarely if ever does it face alternatives in a thoroughly radical spirit, that is, fearlessly thinking things down to the roots. It usually starts with assumptions, involves itself in phrases and slogans, and then proceeds quite illogically to set up a series of affirmations and denials which only require the criticism of sound reason to effectually set them aside.

For instance, modern rationalism acts on the supposition that the only information that justifies action must be susceptible of certain fixed measurements. It further assumes that man always acts as a reasonable being. As a matter of fact, our actions are usually initiated by many elements in which reason plays a very small part, such as impulses, instincts, and desires of various kinds. As Woodrow Wilson once put it, "It is a mistake to say that the mind governs. The mind reigns, but does not govern. We are governed by a tumultuous House of Commons made up of the passions, and the ruling passion is prime minister, and coerces the sovereign." It is not reason as it is usually understood, but the ruling passion, the main intent of the heart, that determines the significance of human action. And when a man asserts in a dogmatic way that faith is not valid knowledge for action, he is not saying something that can be demonstrated by reason, but simply disclosing a fixed limitation he has already decided to put upon his attitude towards life. Of course it is always legitimate that a man shall be permitted to choose the grounds upon which he will act, but this does not authorize him to set aside as irrational, grounds that commend themselves to people of different disposition.

Sometimes, however, the affirmation that faith is valid knowledge has been questioned by those who profoundly wished to believe it, and who were prevented from doing so by some serious mental confusion. It is easy to lose one's way in the grave complexities which arise when our life is invaded by eternal issues. There is always fog where warm currents of water come in contact with cold currents of air; so are there fogs where the eternal touches too closely our mortal existence. When some tremendous sorrow overtakes the heart, slowing up the currents of life and exhausting its vital forces, it is apt to put a serious strain upon faith. And so a devout man may break out in lamentation as does Tennyson in "In Memoriam." In his beautiful prayer to Christ, "Strong Son of God, Immortal Love," the poet says:

"Thou seemest human and divine,
The highest, holiest manhood, thou:
Our wills are ours, we know not how;
Our wills are ours to make them thine!

Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be:
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they!

We have but faith; we cannot know;
For knowledge is of things we see;
And yet we trust it comes from thee,
A beam in darkness: let it grow!"

There is confusion here between a strong desire to believe and a feeling that belief is not knowledge, because knowledge is of things we see. This latter position would not be seriously maintained today by any genuine scientist or philosopher. Yet the

notion that faith is something less than knowledge is a very stubborn one, and hard to get over. The poet, however, appears to be aware of a way out in asserting that faith comes from God, and that amid life's confusions it will grow from more to more provided man's heart grows in reverence too. THIS IS THE WAY OUT: not by seeking first to settle such questions by cold processes of reason, but by directing life towards the will of God. This is the teaching of our Lord. Do the will of God and you will know; your faith shall rest upon valid knowledge; it will grow from more to more until you possess a durable persuasion of the truth of what you believe and desire.

And now if you will put your minds to it we may be able to clear this confusion from our path.

What makes any belief valid for action is some sort of assurance that it is true. There is a desire for certainty of some kind. The modern man has stumbled a great deal over this word "certainty." How can we be certain that Jesus is the Son of God? that the soul is immortal? that the way of salvation is trustworthy? We believe these things, but can we ever be assured that they are true?

Years ago I came upon a saying of Cardinal Newman that helped me clear up this confusion. He said: "Certainty is a quality of propositions, while certitude is a habit of mind." This means, of course, that knowledge is of more than one kind; that its validity will depend now on certainty, and now on certitude; that one will rise from the character of the intelligence, the other will take its color from the disposition of the man.

For instance, the very statement of mathematical propositions carries certainty of their truth. There is no need to ask whether two and two make four, for that is a direct deliverance of the mind itself.

Mathematical knowledge is the only form of knowledge, strictly speaking, where certainty is a quality of propositions. But although the propositions of science do not carry this sense of inevitability, still they are capable of verification by experiment, and as such may be accepted as certain. Mark this point: to speak of a certain notion as scientific does not justify us in thinking that it is true, but only, that is to be accepted with the authority of science which has been verified by actual experiment. And of course it is clear that there are regions of life which are quite beyond the scope of scientific investigation. Thoughts, desires, affections, all the motions of the impalpable element of the human personality, cannot be weighed or measured like the quantitative elements of science. Yet we have certain ways of testing the deliverances of this immeasurable region. The propositions of philosophy, which seek to set forth the unity of the world, are never capable of certainty; but they may gain a high degree of probability from the severely logical character of reasoning, and so attain unto the character of certitude. But there is a domain of life far wider than that under the control of science or of philosophy: I mean the domain of human relations. You can never have, in the nature of the case, scientific assurance in this region, but you may attain the most valid convictions about truth and reality. Not certainty but certitude, which depends on the habit of the mind, is what is gained here. And if you will reflect upon it you will see that this is really the sort of knowledge that moves the world. It lies at the basis of government, social relations, business and private contracts. It is the foundation of friendship, the heart of the relation between man and wife. You can never say of these human relationships that they are either scientific or philosophic, but that the confidence upon which rests human happiness grows out of moral certitudes entirely, upon the disposition to believe in other men; and this confidence grows, as it must grow, out of the purity of the disposition, and is determined by the final set of the heart.

This is being recognized by modern psychology in very interesting ways. We are vitally influenced both in thinking and in acting by our impulses, desires and urges, which when united together by a common bond tend to shape life in accordance with their aims. Certitudes of the mind, slowly formed through human intercourse, hold the world together. They keep the stream of life moving towards desirable objectives. Whatever contributes to the motion of life, whatever moves life to higher and ever higher forms of self-

expression, is not only valid knowledge, but the highest form of knowledge. Whatever, on the contrary, slows the stream of life is not knowledge, but error.

The most interesting phase of intellectual progress at the present time is the growing disposition on the part of scientists to recognize the necessity of philosophy for a complete coördination of scientific truth. Science today is beginning to appreciate two things: one is its need for philosophy, the other its need for a spiritual conception of the universe. Any first class mind today will reject as unscientific the old saying that "knowledge is of things we see." The world of sensible impressions is beginning to disclose itself as a symbol of invisible reality, for behind the temporal rises the eternal. The imponderable elements of thought are the most important data of scientific investigation. The most useful ideas of science, like the atom, the electron, to say nothing of the vast suggestiveness of the recently announced theory of relativity, are concepts of the mind. They are ideal existences only. To use them at all one must believe in them. They rest upon faith of some kind. It is equally true of mathematical concepts. In fact, the groundwork of science and philosophy is found in a world that is real only to belief, and the trustworthiness of such belief turns at last upon the disposition of the mind. It is because faith is so essential to genuine scientific progress that men of science have always been humble.

So striking has been this advance that in my judgment we shall see within fifty years a very close union between these hitherto supposedly antagonistic regions of experience, science and religion. That union will be founded upon the recognition of faith as a valid form of knowledge, not only for scientific investigation but also for religious experience. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

Many believe this now. Many more will believe it when the joint progress of scientific and religious knowledge has purged the mind of the cloudy confusions of economic rationalism and the impressionistic futilities of clever phrasemakers, and once again permitted man to think of himself as an immortal spirit capable of infinite growth towards God.

Let me then insist that these deep persuasions of truth which grow out of the moral habit and disposition of the mind keep the stream of life moving towards the highest objectives. Destroy faith in them and you have anarchy in government, panic in business, and paralysis in social relations. The clean heart makes the clear mind. It is in the region of the affections, the affinities of the spirit alone, that reside the powers of knowing and understanding ourselves, other selves, and God. This justifies the profound remark of Dr. Martineau that "faith is belief in another's goodness on the inspiration of your own." "All things," as Montaigne long ago said, "take their color from the mind."

> Life, like a dome of many-colored glass,
> Stains the white radiance of eternity.

This applies directly to our relation to God. In the long last, as the psalmist says, God takes his moral complexion from the constitution of the mind: "With the merciful wilt thou shew thyself merciful, with an upright man wilt thou shew thyself upright, with the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure, and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward." Psalm 18. 25, 26.

II.

By this means alone the first Christians gained their faith in Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

It is an astonishing fact that physical contact with Jesus did not make men believers. Not even can this be affirmed wholly of the apostles, for it is written that although they saw and heard and handled the Word of life, yet on the dark night of his betrayal they all forsook him and fled. It was spiritual desire, and not the sight of the eyes, that opened the way to comprehension. Not upon physical contacts, but upon spiritual affinities the final faith must rest. That is why Peter could write to his sterling converts, who had endured all manner of persecution for Christ's sake: "Whom having not seen, ye love." They heard the gospel, and believed it because their hearts were clean. This rightness of disposition opened the way for spiritual apprehension, and they came at last to know the certainty of those things wherein they had been instructed.

Such is and must be the spiritual and

moral process by which we grow into the knowledge and into the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Read the testimony of the early Christians. The confidence which enabled them to adopt and gloriously maintain an unpopular faith was founded upon the moral direction of their desires. By actual experiment on the field of life and in face of opposition they came to know of the certainty of that which they had believed. Paul affirms it in the well known words: "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

This is the word of God on which we must build our faith. There must be no hesitation, no drawing back from fully committing oneself to the will of God. There must be no flinging of oneself, like Tennyson, upon the world's great altar stairs and vaguely trusting to a larger hope, but a determination to keep one's feet on the narrow path which leads upward and onward to the full communion with the eternal God.

To ourselves of the modern world who must needs find our way to the throne of heavenly grace comes the old great word of God: Do my will, and you shall know; commit your way unto me, and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free; love me with your heart, and I will teach your mind to know me.

For the common problem, yours, mine, everyone's, is not to prove ourselves first of all clever thinkers, or even capable of developing a complete philosophy of life, but rather to acknowledge ourselves as those who need salvation, upon whom in these disturbed times the ends of the world have come, to bring home to our spirits an urgent question on which the whole future depends:

What think ye of Christ, friend? When all's done and said,
Like you this Christianity, or not?
It may be false, but will you wish it true?
Has it your vote to be so, if it can?

INSEPARABLE LOVE!*

Rev. James I. Vance, D. D.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8. 35, 38, 39.

This is the greatest climax of the greatest apostle in his greatest epistle. I think Romans is the greatest thing Paul ever wrote. He did not regard himself as the greatest apostle, he felt that he was not worthy even to be called an apostle, but the world regards him as the greatest apostle, and would probably rank him at the top of those who have served under Christ. He wrote thirteen—possibly fourteen—of the books of the New Testament, all of them clear, strong, convincing discussions of Christian truth, but if the church were to vote on the question I think it would elect the Epistle to the Romans as the apostle's greatest production.

In this book there are many passages which fill us with admiration for the richness of Paul's style and for the keenness of his thought. We are constantly amazed at the boundless sweep of his spiritual vision, but I do not think there is anything greater in the book than these closing lines of this victory chapter.

The passage comes right in the middle of the book. It is as if everything else in the epistle sloped up towards this as towards the lofty summit of a peak where the greatest mind of the Christian church in the moment of his holiest inspiration speaks his sublimest message. Standing there with the thorn digging into his flesh, with his body scarred with the wounds of Calvary, and with his face transfigured with the passion of the cross, Paul speaks his soul and says:

"I am persuaded that neither death, nor

* Northfield General Conference.

life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord!"

How did he come to write it? I do not think one could write a thing like that offhand. Words like these do not drop from the end of a pen behind which sits pampered ease, or stolid indifference, or even endowed genius. There are plenty of people who can match Paul's diction, who can equal his vocabulary, and measure up to his literary style, but how to make words say things, that's the rub! Paul knew how to harness words to ideas. He knew more than that: he knew how to make words windows through which to show us the invisible. This is what he has done in this passage.

What is behind it?

First, a chain of logic forged link by link from premise to conclusion, until from a premise which cannot be denied we are chained to a conclusion from which there is no escape.

Logic.

In doing this he develops two main lines of thought.

First he pursues God's eternal purpose back into the shadow of the infinite. He works his way back into that realm before the world was, and shows how God's will has always been the expression of his life. With a logic as fearless as it is devout he traces the path of foreordination, sometimes amid shadows that are blinding and sometimes amid mysteries that are baffling, until by and by he emerges on the everlasting hills where the sun shines and where faith exclaims:

"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose! For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

He works his way through a maze of things until he reaches the cross, where God slays his Son from the foundation of the world. There he stays until he sees what it means, until he discovers to us the mystery of Calvary, until he sees the vail rent, and the mists lift, and the clouds clear, until he discovers the purpose of Calvary, and until, as he sees nail-scarred hands reach forth and tear aside the disguises that human fears had woven across God's face, he begins to say:

"If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

Then he sees where the track of the divine decree leads, and as he discovers the purpose of Calvary he finds that they both tell the same story, the story of a love that has never wavered. As this great fact breaks in upon him he asks:

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"

The logic of that hour was unavoidable, and in an ecstasy of assurance Paul surrenders himself to the glory of his conclusion, as he says:

"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord!"

And so he makes this declaration because divine will has decreed it, and divine love has revealed it.

It takes brains to write a thing like this. Paul wrote it because he had a mind great enough to track God into his eternal council chamber, and a faith clear enough to see the lights which flame along the everlasting hills. He wrote it because he had superb mental ability. Let these midget minds that reject everything they find themselves unable to pack into the kit of their senses go to school to Paul and learn how to think! Let those infirm mentalities whose one sign of intellectual prowess is their ability to doubt go to school to this master genius of the Christian church, whose glory was his faith and whose

message is, "God loves us!" Paul wrote this because he had a great mind. His logic is absolutely compelling.

LIFE.

There is, however, something more than intellect behind it. It takes more than brains to write such a passage: it takes life. As we read it we can feel the apostle's beating heart throb behind this sublime declaration. Paul wrote this passage out of a great experience.

Before he could say, "Who can separate us from the love of God?" and follow his question with a catalogue of the things which cannot separate us from the love of God, he had to experience those things.

Before he could say, "Death cannot separate us from the love of God," he had to die; and he did. We hear him say, "I die daily. I am dead. My life is hid with Christ in God." He surrendered himself to death. In the deep experience he had of identifying himself with his Saviour, he died. Then he tore off death's bands and laughed in death's face, and said, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law, but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!" He came back from encounter with death to tell us that there is nothing in death to be afraid of, because death can never separate us from the love of God.

"There is no death!
What seems so is transition.
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life Elysian,
Whose portal we call death."

Before he could say, life cannot separate us from God's love, he had to live: and he did live. No man ever lived a richer life. He was not a backwoods product. He was not a provincial. He was a man of the world. He knew life's glamor. He had heard its call. He had faced all of its temptations. He lived in the midst of the world, and he came back from those things to tell us that we are not to be afraid of life, because there is nothing in life that can ever come between us and God's love.

Before he could say that angels and principalities and powers cannot separate us from the love of God he had to face these spiritual foes in their most dreadful form. He knew the grim power they had over life. He had fought these terrors of the invisible world. He set himself against them as they threw themselves against him, and he said, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." He fought all these, and he came back from that great conflict to tell us that there is nothing in the unseen world we need be afraid of, because there is nothing there that can separate us from the love of God.

Before he could say that neither things present nor things to come can separate us from the love of God he had to explore those realms. He did, and when he explored the present and the future he was caught up until he saw things which it is not lawful for a man to utter. God took him out there and let him look, and he came back to tell us to be unafraid. He said, "I have seen it all, and there is nothing here or there, nothing now or ever, that shall be able to separate us from the love of God."

Such statements can only come out of great experience, and Paul had that experience. The reason some people have so little to say for God is that they have no experience. If you are talking out of your head, you will soon run dry, you will soon grow dumb. The reason people say such silly and cheap and shallow things about God is they do not know him. They have never had much of a spiritual experience. Get your experience, and it will be like a fountain. It is easy to talk when you know God, when there is something inside of you that is all the while filling your lips with a great message. Get an experience, and then your words will be like clouds that are shot through with fire by the glory of the sunshine.

These are the two things that go surety for this statement: a logic that cannot be refuted, and a life that cannot be answered. Paul had a mind that could think God's thoughts after him, and he lived God's life until by and by the logic of his conviction was wrought into the very character of his experience, and he reached the hour when his great soul could stay dumb no longer,

his great heart could not keep its secret, and with a voice whose tones are like the music of a harp, the great apostle chants the measures of his mighty faith and says:

"I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord!"

What Better Gospel?

Let us not be so absorbed, however, in finding out how he said it as to forget that he said it. He said it! He said:

"Nothing can separate us from the love of God! Nothing,—nothing,—absolutely nothing can separate us from the love of God! Nothing in life, nothing in death, nothing in time, nothing in eternity, nothing inside of us, nothing outside of us, nothing in the circumstances of life, nothing we can think, nothing we can ever do, nothing in our personality, nothing in the life of our neighbor, nothing that can be described, no sin, no sorrow, no suffering, no calamity, no darkness, nothing in this world, nothing in any world, can ever make God stop loving us!"

What better gospel do you want than that? I defy you to find a better gospel. Turn your imagination loose this morning. Try to imagine what you would put into your highest conception of good news. Try to paint into your picture everything you would like to possess and experience, then come back with your picture and you have nothing sweeter, fairer, or more divine than the gospel that tells us that nothing can ever make God stop loving us. When one realizes that, he is saved!

That is what Jesus came to say to us. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. He who hath looked into my face hath looked into the face of a God whose love is changeless."

I don't believe one can really hold out against God when he gets hold of that fact in that way. God loves people into goodness. I am not enamored of a religion that works with fear. Of course I believe in hell,—I cannot deny it when I see what is going on around me,—but I do not believe God gets his children close to his side with that conception of existence.

You are saying, How can this be true in view of the facts of the world, in view of the facts of sin and blasphemy and vice and all that is hostile to God? How can it be true when we look into the face of pain and suffering?

That is what a little woman said to me one day as she picked up her pale-faced, sickly baby from the floor and went into another room where her poor little mother, all that was left of her, lay helpless on a bed of pain. For eighteen years she had been suffering from creeping paralysis. Her limbs and body had wasted away, and of her little crumpled and shrivelled body there was only about forty pounds left,—just enough to suffer. What can we say for God's love in the face of a tragedy like that? And when we see the libertine, the drunkard, the criminal, the murderer, the thief, going on in their own way, how can we say that nothing can separate us from the love of God? Has not the great apostle allowed himself to be carried away by his enthusiasm? Will he not have to abate his zeal? But the glory of it is that in the face of all the sin and suffering of the world he does not revise his statement.

The glory of it is not that he says there is no death, and therefore we are not separated. He does not say there are no hazards in life, and therefore life cannot separate us from God's love. He does not say there are no barriers out in the future, and therefore things to come cannot separate us. He sees them all. No man ever saw with clearer vision the awful facts of life than this man Paul. He gazed every black fact full in the face, he took its measure and saw all the damage it could do. And in the face of that he tells us they are absolutely powerless to make God stop loving us!

No; the doubt which assails this statement is a lie. These things may make us stop loving God, but they can never make God stop loving us. God hates our sins, but he loves us, and he always will love us. He loves everybody. No man can sin enough to make God stop loving him. God's love is changeless, but sin produces a change in our love. When we give up our sins, we turn our faces towards God.

Yonder is a mother whose boy has gone

wrong, committed a crime, been sentenced to jail perhaps. The boy does not mind it very much, but how about the mother? Has she separated herself from her boy, has she withdrawn her love, just because the boy has gone wrong? You know a mother's love, and you know no true mother, no true father, would cast a child out of his house because the child had done wrong. Are we better than God? Just carry it out into his great heart!

God's love is wonderful! It is what makes him God. It is deeper than all seas. It is higher than all heavens. It is brighter than the sun. Time cannot change it. Darkness cannot obscure it. Hate cannot kill it. It is mightier than death. It is stronger than life. It is as glorious as God. Sidney Lanier said, "If we could love as God loves, we should be as God is."

Let us not be afraid of God! Let us not presume on his love, let us not grieve it, but let us not be afraid of God, save with that kind of holy fear which is reverence! We can afford to let him have his way with us. We can go blind with God. We can trust him without any reservation. His way is best.

A Christian man had been attacked in a foul way on the street one day, brutally shot, and his pastor, a friend of mine, tarried with him through the day. As he talked with him about his condition he said:

"Whether you are to live or to go, can you say, Thy will be done?"

Without a moment's hesitation he replied: "Why, of course! What use have I for my life but to serve the will of God?"

Have we lost that great faith? Let us get back to it this morning! Have things seemed to come between us and God's love? Have we for any reason been tempted to say, "God has forgotten"? Have there been things in your life you could not understand? Are there things in the future which seem to cast a shadow? And because of these things are you sometimes tempted to say, "Nobody cares! God himself has forgotten"? Let us get back to this great conviction of God's changeless love if we have wandered from it, and let us remember that God is watching: watching for us, and waiting for the hour when we shall rise up from our sins, and with a prayer that is half sob and half song say, "I will arise and go to my Father"! Let us nestle in his arms, and with confidence look up into the face of the great Lover of our souls and say:

"O God, I am not afraid of you, for you love me!"

"THE MIRAGE SHALL BECOME A POOL."*

Rev. J. Stuart Holden, D. D.

In the book of the prophet Isaiah, the 35th chapter, there is a promise in the seventh verse on which I want to dwell simply and briefly this morning. It is part of that wonderful chapter which many of us know by heart, in which the prophet seeks to encourage an exiled people to launch out in faith and obedience upon the faithfulness of God, and in response to his invitation and command to get back to the land from which they have come, and in which for them the promises of God are going to be fulfilled.

Those who published these writings of the Old Testament in the form in which we have them, appended headings to the chapters, headings which sometimes have very little to do with the content and real meaning of the prophecies. The heading of this chapter, "Joyful flourishing of Christ's kingdom," while that may be and probably is an allowable interpretation of this prophecy, it is by no means its first one, it is by no means its original one. But let that pass, and we shall read that prophecy not only in the light of its original meaning, but also in the light of the later fulfillment which is suggested by the heading of the chapter.

This is the promise: "The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water"; or reading from the Revised Version, "The mirage shall become a pool." We shall keep to that figure in our consideration this morning, "The mirage shall become a pool." The unreal

* Northfield General Conference, August 1922.

thing shall become real, the thing that you wish shall become actual experience, the alluring hope you have before you shall materialize in actual gift and experience in your lives.

To understand the significance of this promise it is necessary to acquaint ourselves with the circumstances under which it was uttered.

Israel, God's people, was in captivity. The soul of the nation had become despondent and craven and reluctant for anything like enterprize under the rigorous discipline of that national captivity. Now the time had come, and God had made it possible for them to return, but the people feared the desert, and they mistrusted the future, and they said one to another: "Far better let us stay in Babylon under conditions to which we have become inured, rather than trek across the desert toward ills which we can only too accurately forecast and imagine!"

The prophet endeavors to rekindle their lost zeal and their keenness for national life in all that it meant by a picture of what that pilgrimage would be, a pilgrimage to which they were summoned with God in their midst, God the pioneer who should plan the journey for the army of his people, God himself the presence which should surround them and in which their safety should be assured, God himself their prince who would crown that journey at its happy conclusion. In order to impress upon them the possibilities that were before them, in order to bring them into a state of willingness to go on and out with God, the prophet takes the poetry of the rose as his text, and from other probable experience he declares to them the faithfulness of God, upon which their faith may stay with absolute certainty. The mirage and the miracle of which it will be the setting and furnish the opportunity, are only part of his exhortation to courageous ongoing with their Lord.

Let us understand about this mirage. What is it? Any of you who have been privileged to travel in Eastern tropical lands know that a mirage is a desert illusion,—an illusion of water, of a verdant oasis, of palm trees,—which allures and tantalizes and cruelly deceives thirsty and weary men who trudge toward it for rest and refreshment. It promises rest and refreshment, but only to disappoint and madden the eager seekers. The nearer they approach to it, the further it seems to recede, until coming up to where it seemed to be, nothing is found but the dry and trampled grass of the abandoned lair of some desert beast; and the poor maddened seeker, disillusioned and disappointed, very often falls to die on the hot, burning sand. So the mirage obviously stands for semblance without substance. It is nothing more than a mocking disappointment, standing to these people in the well understood speech of the prophet for the common experience of hopes which never come to fruition, visions which prove to be but idle imaginations, dreams, whether by night or by day, which simply do not come true.

The prophet declares that the apparently illusive things that these people in captivity have cherished,—cherished more or less secretly,—shall be realized if they will go out and then go on with God. He says to them in effect what the writer to the Hebrews says at the commencement of his 11th chapter, that their faith shall give substance to the things they hope for. He says to them that there will be no final contradiction between their God-inspired aspirations and their experience. For, after all, it was their musing and meditation upon God and his goodness to them, God and his promises to them, which erected those mirage-like hopes on the horizon.

The prophet says to them in effect, "The great thing you have got to do with your visions is not to wait for them, but to go after them. The mirage shall become a pool to you." For despite its disappointments the mirage is an image of something that actually exists somewhere. A mirage is not a creation of the subjective mind of the beholder. It is not something that a man imagines. It is a reflection of something that does exist somewhere else. It is caused by the refraction of the sunlight upon the hot sand. The sun's rays do not travel vertically, but they travel along a concave or a convex arc, and so they reflect scenes upon the horizon and deceive the eye. The well and the palm trees and the green glades and the cool shades actually do exist, but they do not exist just where they seem to be.

Now that is what the prophet means to say to them, that the mirage is a reflection of some reality, and as you go out and go on with God your hopes will be realized, his promises will be fulfilled to you.

Cherished Ideals.

It is not difficult when this is borne in mind, my friends, to see where and how closely this touches our lives in our present circumstances.

Everyone of us has cherished ideals, alluring and full of promise, which yet have never materialized in experience. We have all had our full of pursuing what have proved to be shadowy and dim unrealities, and in many cases of pursuing ideals which have been created for us by the very promise and challenge of the Christian faith. Christ has put them into our hearts,—visions of holiness and usefulness, visions of service, of deep soul satisfaction, visions of high accomplishment and worthy aim. They have been put into our hearts, but so far they have never been realized in any satisfying degree. I bring you this message today, not to say anything new to you, but to remind you of the truth of the things that you have always believed and embraced, that the mirage shall become to you a pool as you go out and on with God.

Is life a stranger to the issue? Has life a friendly or an unfriendly meaning for the Christian? Does past experience warrant our further ventures of faith? Is it not better for us to accept life as it comes, without seeking any of those higher things which, mirage-like, only promise irritating disillusion? What is the use of striving after the unattainable?

None of us is a stranger to that issue. It presents itself to us in the form of a challenge in our darkest hours. Few of us have not faced that issue. God grant that we have faced it courageously, prayerfully, fearlessly!

Of course this is the cynic's final judgment on the nature of life, and we have had far too much of it from philosophers like Schopenhauer and the rest of the pessimists, that life is just a series of snares anyhow, that we are simply lured into making commitments and then are deceived, that nothing is ever as good as it looks, that its promises are vain deceits and its fair prospects just a mirage. That is a common philosophy of life today, and we have yielded to it far too readily, with its complementary philosophy of conduct. Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die! Let us get through life as quickly and comfortably as we can, and let us be thankful if we can ever cheat life of its prey! That is the complementary philosophy of conduct of that cynical view of life's meaning.

But the Christian faith is in direct opposition. The Christian faith anticipated by Isaiah offers a direct antithesis to that suggestion. The Christian faith declares that everything in life is actually better than it seems, for everything in life is a reflection, a broken reflection of eternal life. The mirage does reflect something that actually exists in the mind and purpose and power of God. The Christian faith declares that life is a process of education, a preparation for something better, an opportunity for developing instincts and capacities for higher and holier service and experience. The Christian faith declares that joy and happiness are an emergence from duty, that happiness is never more than a mere installment on the way to a great realization, and that every glimpse we have of pure and high achievement and delight is just a foregleam of the glory of God to which we have been called.

What is its corollary? "Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord." Its corollary is to follow with undeviating footsteps the course of the way of Christ's life. What you wish and have never yet fully realized is not an illusion. It does exist in the mind of God; and as you and I journey toward it along the pathway of faith and obedience, this promise says we shall find positive strength and sustenance. The mirage shall actually become to us a well of salvation before we reach the thing of which it is but the reflection.

Visions and Realities.

Now it is easy enough to make application of a great word like this, for every one of us is probably naming to himself and herself just now our own particular mirage, the thing we have hoped for and the thing about which we have been disappointed, the secret desire we have cherished and the secret disappointment that has

embittered our minds and perhaps vitiated our faith and our energy.

For instance, there are those who have visioned high and pure human delights,—prosperity, success, prestige, influence, human love as seen in its joyous expression in other lives; and yet despite all their foot-sore pursuit of it the mirage has never yet been overtaken. No refreshing spring of plenty has ever been reached at which they could fill their vessel. Oh, it is not the weight of life that makes it heavy: it is the emptiness of life that makes it heavy for most people! It is the empty life and not the full life that is burdensome and toilsome to most, until now they are almost ready to join the cynics and to talk bitterly about life's disillusioning injustice, that these things are for the few and not for all. They have seen a mirage, and it is only a mirage.

My friends, I want to say to you that the satisfaction of every true instinct does exist for you in the mind of God, only you visioned a distorted and an inadequate reflection of it. The satisfaction of God's purposes may never come to you in the form of wells and palm trees, may never come to you by way of prosperous business or human love and joys. These things are just a mirage. The pool, the stream, is God himself communicated to the soul by Jesus Christ. These other things are as powerless to quench thirst, to give rest, to impart satisfaction, as is the hot, burning sand for the tired traveler. Your experience of disappointment and mine are just God's way of recalling us from mere castles in the air to the city that hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God.

There is one man who followed mirage after mirage and has recounted his experience, which expresses the experience, indeed, of the entire world. He saw riches and knowledge and bodily delights and fame and the joy of creative work, and he said after them all,—and he had exceptional opportunities for pursuing them to advantage,—"Vanity, vanity, all is vanity!" And the same man pointed the way from the mirage to the pool, and he says, "This is the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, keep his commandments, believe and obey him, and your mirage shall become a pool!"

Or again, there are those who have visioned an experience of Christian life in which victory over all sinful tendencies, in which the acquisition of virtue, in which effective service and consequent unclouded joy, are the normal characteristics. But in pressing toward that vision they have found conflict and tears, strenuous duty and imperious demands, and a strange contradiction of their aspirations and tendencies. They have made strange and unsettling discoveries in regard to their own nature, and although they are pressing on today they find that the ideal is always a little further on than the place to which they obtain and reach. It may be that some are here almost ready to abandon the quest, almost ready to settle down to inevitable ordinariness of Christian life, to make the best of a disappointing situation.

My friends, I want to say that the life you have seen afar off does exist for you in the mind of God. The mirage does reflect a reality. What we see is just the refracted reflection of God's thought and purpose,—the measure of the stature of the fulness of Jesus Christ. Its power and allurement are part of the truth of the divine inspiration. It is always the glory of the gospel, not that we understand it fully or realize it entirely, but that somehow it compels us to go on. God does not tease his children. If they follow on, there will be no final contradiction of their hope, that hope which has been created by his mind revealed to them. Meanwhile it is as though God would say to us that the fulfillment of these our hopes is altogether too rich, too large for our present capacity and immediate realization.

Let me give you an illustration of what I mean.

The other day a lamp on my study table would not burn. I could not get any glow from the bulb when I turned on the current. I went to the cupboard where such things are kept, and took out a new bulb, but I did not take time to examine it to see if it was of the correct voltage, if it was suited for the voltage with which my house is wired. I put it on the fixture, turned on the current, and at once there was a glow of incandescence dazzling in its brilliance, and the filament was burned out and the lamp was wasted. It could not stand the high volt-

age, it had been made for a lower voltage. And often that realization we crave for, if it were granted to us now with our present capacity, which is the result of our experience largely, would be just like the lamp put on to a too high-powered circuit: it would be destructive, and not corrective and helpful in our lives.

Oh, do not fall into the mistake, my friends, of concluding that any promise of God in Christ which you have not realized just how and when you expected to realize it, is a delusion! Listen to the story of men who have traveled the road that you and I are traveling: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." You may always be quite sure of this, that your interpretation of the promises of God is always a smaller thing than God's real meaning.

How much the Bible says about hope! This is the real inwardness and significance and value of Christian hope, that it secures our continuance, keeps our souls alive unto God by kindled expectation, and saves us from becoming mere desert rangers, satisfied with the things the desert offers.

Or let me give you another illustration. There are those who have cherished high and alluring visions of the kingdom of God, of a time when the social applications of the gospel of Jesus Christ shall be so sincerely and generally made by Christian people that vicious selfishness shall no longer blight the lives of the helpless poor, when men the whole world o'er shall in the language of Robbie Burns "brithers be for a' that," when God's will shall be done on earth even as it is done in heaven, when war and all its evils shall be relegated to the museum of discarded and outworn barbarisms like the drink trade and slums and profiteering, when government shall be of the people, by the people, and for the people, and political exploitation shall never again be possible or known, when equal opportunity for every man shall insure the juster share of life's good things, when no child shall be robbed of its birthright of health and happiness even before it is born, because all the ways and streets of every city shall radiate from and lead to a temple of God's worship. We have all visioned some great view of the kingdom of God like that.

In the year 1666, after the great fire of London, when London came to be rebuilt, Sir Christopher Wren, the great architect, planned a London of which St. Paul's Cathedral should be the center. Those of you who are acquainted with the topography of my city will follow me in this. He planned for that great house of prayer and praise to be the center of the city, and for every highway of the city to radiate north, south, east and west from that great cathedral. Why did not that great vision materialize? I will tell you. All round about that district were slum properties, tortuous, narrow, crowded streets, in which were places of business and houses undemolished by the fire, owned by selfish people who would not part with their property on terms to make possible the building of that city as he had planned it; and so today we have the anomaly of that great cathedral in the midst of its unworthy surroundings.

We have all visioned a great vision of the kingdom of God, the tabernacle of God dwelling amongst men and men recognizing his government in every sphere and interest of human life, and we have seen human selfishness combating and successfully combating for the time the plan and will of God, and despite the earnest endeavors of those who have seen that great vision—let us be quite candid!—nothing very much seems to happen in this way. Right still seems to be on the scaffold, and wrong seems to be on the throne. Well, are we to conclude that the vision of the kingdom of God is a mere mirage? If it is, on the strength of this word I proclaim to you that mirage is to become a pool, for the thing actually exists. Where does it exist? In the mind of God, in the kingdom of Christ's proclamation. Read again Christ's promise of a new heaven and a new earth, and know that this is what the New Testament assurance of Christ's coming again really means. He will come to them that look for him, not in ecstatic emotion fed by false stimuli, but in energetic self-sacrificing service. The mirage shall become a pool.

I was in a business office the other day, and was merely arrested and at first amused, and then I trust in some measure inspired by a motto I saw over a business man's desk. It was this: "The only difference between a difficulty and an impossibility is that one takes a bit longer to accomplish." The mirage shall become a pool if you want it to. If you are in earnest, then press on toward the mark for the high calling of God in Christ Jesus!

This, then, is the meaning of the prophet's great promise to us today, not only that our mirage-like hopes are justified, but that even as we press toward them they actually become a means of ministry to our souls, they actually become as the wells of salvation to us. For what do they do? They secure our ongoing by their promise. They discipline our lives by the concentration they necessitate. They purify our minds by their demand for the undivided supremacy of the spiritual. They impart to us by the very strife they set up what we could never acquire by mere satisfied ease. They inspire us to seek our satisfactions where alone we shall ever find them, in the realities of the good Lord and Father of us all. And even when some completed task, some bit of work that you and I have done, taunts us with the imperfections we see in it,—for our work is never the thing we visioned, never!—this assurance of the mirage is full of inspiration for the next bit of duty and service; and the man whose life is so characterized by a courageous ongoing, by the concentration of his whole power upon the supremacy of the spiritual, by a divine discontent with everything save God and his glory, that man has drunk of the wells of salvation, and his life attests the truth of this promise. His very mirages have become pools to him.

So I close this morning by saying to you, my friends, go on following your mirage, the mirage which seems so fair and bright and alluring in this place of Northfield! Go on following that vision of holiness and service, of purity and love, of a life like unto the life of the Lord Christ's ministered to from above, and ministering on every hand! Cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward, as saith the New Testament! Let your religion be the transmission of ideals into facts! Let this be your inspiration, that just beyond the crest of the next hill, just over the horizon, is the satisfying reality of which you have seen the bright reflection! And even as you go you need not thirst, you need not faint, for he who goes with you says to his pilgrim friends, "The water that I give him shall be in him a well of water springing up unto life eternal." Blessed be God!

> Ever the dream life grows clearer and finer,
> Ever the star draws us up from the clod,
> Up to the height of a glory diviner,
> Up to the infinite call of our God!

Let this be our quest, and that shall be our conquest!

CHRISTIAN LITERATURE FOR MOSLEMS.

Rev. Samuel M. Zwemer, D. D.

Martin Luther, while toiling at his version of the Bible for the German people in the old castle at Wartburg, fancied one day that he saw the devil, and promptly hurled his inkpot at the intruder. One of his contemporaries, however, wrote of a better way to spill ink against all the powers of darkness and oppression. Speaking of the Turks, with whom Europe was then also at war, he wrote in 1530:

"The best way and most effectual to overcome and win the Turks would be if they perceived that which Christ taught and expressed in his life to shine in us. For truly it is not meet or convenient to declare ourselves Christian men by this token if we send many thousands of heathen people to hell, but if we make many infidels faithful. In my mind it were best, before we should try with them in battle, to attack them with epistles and some little books."

What is the real trouble with the Turks and the Arabs, the Egyptians and all the other restless folk of the Near East? Is it not that their fundamental religious beliefs are incompatible with modern science and the Christian principles of ethics and freedom? It is the old struggle of the crescent and the cross,—the ideals of the man of Mecca against the ideals of the Man

of Nazareth. Now you can never change the ideals of a people by machine guns, or censorship, or suppression. The only power that can influence minds and hearts is the power of persuasion. The pen is mightier than the sword, and the printing-press has far more dynamic than a powder-factory.

The whole of the Near East is stirring with new intellectual life. The old wine-skins can no longer hold the new wine of Western thought and philosophy. This is why the Moslem and the Christian press in the Near East are engaged in a duel which is as inevitable as the Reformation and the Renaissance were to Europe.

Shall we let the Near East alone, allow massacres and deportations, and wash our hands of the whole business? It is held by some that the whole missionary movement is an impertinence: we have no right to disturb the old conditions and civilizations; Islam is good enough for the Eastern races and the Negroes of Africa. Men seem to justify the commercial and political invasion of Moslem lands who oppose the religious mission as unnecessary and futile. A statesmen's answer to these objectors is conclusive:

"The change in sentiment in favor of the foreign missionary in a single generation," said Mr. Roosevelt, "has been remarkable. The whole world, which is rapidly coming into neighborhood relations, is recognizing as never before the real needs of mankind, and is ready to approve and strengthen all the moral forces which stand for the uplift of humanity. There must be government for the orderly and permanent development of society. There must be intercourse among peoples in the interests of commerce and growth. But, above all, there must be moral power, established and maintained under the leadership of good men and women. The upright and far-seeing statesman, the honest and capable trader, and the devoted Christian missionary, represent the combined forces which are to change the Africa of today into the greater and better Africa of the future. Beyond the question of rule or traffic are the responsibilities of America in the moral uplift of the people of Africa. The responsibility is to be met in coöperation with the Christian forces of other nations."

Among all the Christian forces that we can release in the Near East there is none that can penetrate more deeply, extend its influence more widely, and abide more permanently than the printing-press. The power of the press in Moslem lands is no longer a matter of theory. Islam is today using the press in every great center as never before. The Moslem press by its enterprize and activity is a constant challenge to Christian missions.

The American Christian Literature Society for Moslems was founded in 1915 on an interdenominational basis. It has for its purpose the spread of the gospel by the printed page wherever Moslems are found. With headquarters in New York, it has already been able to support the work of production and distribution in Algiers, Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Turkey, Persia, Malaysia, India and China. The society has no costly organization, no overhead expenses. All contributions are used for the purposes indicated.

It is proposed at this time to raise the sum of $25,000, to be used in the preparation of special literature to meet special needs in the large language areas. Ten million Moslems in China have at present only a half dozen books and a score of tracts suitable for their special need. In Java, Sumatra and the Straits Settlements the missionaries are clamoring for a more adequate literature. In Arabic there is already considerable, but the problem of child literature, a boys' magazine, the translation of important Christian classics, and the problem of distribution face us. In Persia the provision of new books and leaflets would mean immediate doubling of the effective value of evangelistic forces.

That there is a growing demand for Christian literature among Moslems is evident from the fact that in the past fifteen years one million eight hundred thousand books were sold and distributed from the Nile Mission Press alone. Last year fifteen colporters sold twenty-seven thousand books in the Nile Valley. Ten thousand copies of the "Sermon on the Mount" in Diglot, Chinese and Arabic have been printed and put on sale with the Tract Societies throughout China. Also the booklet, "God in Islam." In Palestine, now linked to Egypt by rail, the opportunity is unique and the demand steadily increasing.

Prayer is needed above all for the deeper conviction at home regarding the importance of using books and tracts in evangelism,—that God may set free missionaries who will devote all of their time to the preparation and revision of literature for Moslems, that bookshops may be opened in every great Mohammedan city, and that literature may be used far more than it has been heretofore in the great pilgrim centers,—Mecca, Medina, Keruba and Tunka. To the last mentioned place in Egypt more than four thousand pilgrims go annually. While the missionary may not be able to enter the Holy Land of Arabia, Miss de Mayer and other workers have proved the possibility of distributing literature to Mecca pilgrims at Jiddah and from Damascus.

The Mohammedan nations are awake. The East is no longer sluggish: it is alert, aroused, inquiring, and the eagerness for literature that will answer their questions, social, ethical and religious, is without parallel in the past. Shall not we meet this new opportunity by a new emphasis on the power of the press, and follow the advice of Erasmus, "attempting to win even our enemies with epistles and some little books"?

PERSONALIA.

In a recent address Dr. Torrey gave the following "secrets of power" in **D. L. Moody's life:**

He was fully surrendered to God; he was in the deepest and fullest sense a man of prayer; he was a man who studied and used the Bible; he was humble,—"the humblest man I ever knew"; he was marked by an entire absence of a love of money; he had a consuming passion for the salvation of the lost; and he had a definite baptism with the Holy Spirit.

"The Mentor" magazine says that "Black Beauty," the most successful animal classic ever written, was sold by the writer, **Anna Sewell,** for less than $100. While in America alone the book has achieved a circulation to date of more than 3,000,000 copies, the Quaker author who wrote it on her sick bed, and whose life was one of remarkable bravery and cheerfulness under the most depressing of circumstances, is practically unknown to fame. She was born in Yarmouth, England, March 30, 1820, and died in 1877, one year after the book was published.

From the football field to a Bowery parish on the lower East Side of New York City is in itself a novel experience. But to stay there for 25 years as pastor in a community of 416,000 people, only 9500 of whom are natives of native parentage, is an achievement worthy of note; for to be a a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ for that length of time among Russian Jews, Italians, Slavs and Chinese tests a man to the limit.

The dedication of the new five-story Community House of the Church of all Nations of the Methodist Episcopal Church at 9 Second Avenue, New York City, acclaims that the **Rev. John R. Henry** has stood the test, and has made good. And now that his dream of a building adequate for the needs of the community has come true, this six-footer who did much to make the football team at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, win victories during the late nineties, the while he edited the college newspaper, may well look forward to years of even greater success as he builds on the foundation which character, personality, and broad sympathy for folks of all tongues and every condition have laid during the days when he had no decent place to house his flock, and dug up the support for his work where he could.

Many readers of the RECORD will learn with regret of the death of **Miss A. B. Duryee** of Summit, N. J. She had been a subscriber to this magazine since its beginning. She often visited Northfield, and sent friends there, for she loved the place and D. L. Moody's work. She was called home after three years as a helpless invalid.

Her sister, Mrs. T. F. Butterworth, another good friend of Northfield and the RECORD, also died suddenly of pneumonia in January.

"The Bible is the Book of all books I love," said Helen Keller, the world's most famous deaf and blind woman, in a recent interview which Rev. A. Wesley Mell had

with her in behalf of the American Bible Society.

"I should like to have my picture taken with my Bible," she continued. But her Bible is not like yours, for she reads not with her eyes, but with her sensitive finger tips, by a system of raised dots representing letters.

"What is your favorite chapter, Miss Keller?" Mr. Mell asked.

Miss Keller promptly opened the Gospel of St. John to the ninth chapter, and swiftly, and with tender and caressing touch, her trained fingers traced the raised dots until she reached the fourth verse:

"I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work."

Her face grew serious and tense as she slowly repeated these words, but it lighted as she read on: "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

Miss Keller then turned to the first chapter, and with radiant illumination of expression she read aloud: "In him was life, and the life was the light of men. . . . . That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

In the death of **Lord Kinnaird** England has lost a conspicuous figure in the religious world. For more than half a century his name has been associated with every prominent evangelical undertaking, and since the death of Earl Shaftesbury Lord Kinnaird has been recognized as his successor in a position of leadership.

His was a distinctly virile type of Christianity. He retained undiminished his interest in athletics, especially in football, serving as president of the National Football Association for a number of years. His work among boys found expression widely. He assisted Henry Drummond in the establishment of the Boys' Brigade, and was associated with Quintin Hogg, with whom he was at Eton, in the founding of homes for working boys.

Whatever Lord Kinnaird undertook he did it with enthusiasm that at once revealed his sincerity and selflessness. While fervent in spirit, he was not slothful in business, for as an officer of the large banking firm of Barclay, Bevan & Co. he carried heavy responsibilities, and his judgment of values in certain lines of investment was widely recognized.

His breadth of interest is evidenced from the many positions in which he served both the nation and the church. Thrice he represented the king as Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly of Scotland. Suitable tribute was paid to his memory at the memorial service at Saint Martin-in-the-Field, which was conducted by the Chaplain General of the British Forces, Bishop Taylor Smith. Tributes to the memory of Lord Kinnaird were paid by representatives of the Y. M. C. A., the Zenana Bible and Medical Mission, the Shaftesbury Society, and the World Evangelical Alliance.

Throughout his life Lord Kinnaird had the whole-hearted fellowship in his work and interests of **Lady Kinnaird,** who passed away only eleven days prior to his summons. Thus, united in life, they were not far separated in death. It is a tribute to their influence that a son who shared in his father's religious interests will maintain the traditions of the family.

A New Northfield Speaker for 1923.

Rev. James Reid, M. A., is minister of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Eastbourne, England, and is one of the greatest pulpit forces in England. He was trained at Edinburgh University and at New College, Edinburgh. His first charges were at Oban and Paisley. His success at Eastbourne, a popular seaside resort on the south coast of England, has been extraordinary. He is in great demand as a preacher on special occasions. He declined a call to succeed Dr. Alexander Whyte in Edinburgh.

Mr. Reid is only 46. His recent volume of sermons, "The Victory of God," has introduced him to a large constituency in England and America, and his ministry at the Northfield General Conference next August will be awaited with eagerness.

I have renewed the subscriptions of last year for six pastors. . . . . The Record is the most valuable periodical I have.—Evangelist Milton R. Rees.

OUR BOOK TABLE.

Belief in Christ, by Charles Gore. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. 329 pages. $2.25.

Modernism has entered in full tide the great universities of Oxford and Cambridge. The religious literature of England is a mass of perplexities, and many are trying to feel their way through from doubt to belief. Bishop Gore accepts some of the critical positions, but he is the greatest defender of the historic faith of Christianity to be found in Great Britain at the present time. This book is one of a series of three: "Belief in God," "Belief in Christ," and a third one yet to be published on the Spirit, which will treat of the development of the church.

Bishop Gore is a theologian by temperament, but this book is not theology. It is a candid "critical estimate of all the evidence that concerns the person of Christ, and shows that the belief about him that really grows out of the evidence, taken all together, and which best accounts for all the facts, is just the traditional belief in the incarnation of the eternal Son of God."

Strange to say, after two thousand years men are seeking an answer to the old question, "Whom do men say that I am?" Whatever they do say they almost universally say that he is something more than just a man like other men. He is the "portrait of God," "represents God more fully than any man who ever lived," "in some sense he reveals God to the soul." So devout men are saying everywhere, even extreme critics. "But whom say ye that I am?" Bishop Gore pushes the question home, discusses it from every angle, considers every adverse critical explanation or theory with scholarly care and analytic keenness that leaves very little more to be said.

If men were convinced by controversy and an appeal to facts we might feel that many would be won back to the historic faith in the deity of Christ. Men are not usually convinced in that way; nevertheless, no theory can stand that cannot be rationally defended as the one best agreeing with the facts available. Bishop Gore has performed that task for the English speaking people. He has shown that the traditional belief, the belief of the first disciples that Jesus was the incarnate Son of God, is the most rational explanation of the facts as we know them. In this respect he has performed an outstanding service to the men of his generation.—S. C. H.

Next Month.

The Necessity of Christ, by Rev. John McDowell, D. D.

The Founder of Democracy, by Rev. Norman Maclean, D. D.

The Work of the Holy Spirit, by Rev. G. Campbell Morgan, D. D.

Young Men in the Sunday School, by Richard K. Morton.

"Life of Christ," by Giovanni Papini. A book notice.

Living Christ and the Four Gospels (The), by R. W. Dale. George H. Doran Co., New York. 299 pages. $1.25 net.

Lectures 30 years old, but none the less valuable and needed today, on the historicity of Jesus and the Gospels.

Dr. Dale's first argument is from personal experience of the living Christ. This never grows old.

The historical trustworthiness of the Gospels is developed out of the writings of the church Fathers. Recent research has practically little to add to the material available to Dr. Dale.

Lord of Thought (The), by Lily Dougall and Cyril W. Emmet. George H. Doran Co., New York. 324 pages. $2.50 net.

A reverent study of the problems which confronted Jesus Christ, with a suggestion of the solutions he offered, the conclusion being that Christ is original and dominant in the realm of thought.

Dual authorships are not as a rule very satisfactory in results, but this volume is not really a collaboration, but two books in one, Parts I and II (more than two-thirds of the contents) being written from the standpoint of an amateur theologian by Miss Dougall, and Part III by Rev. Cyril W. Emmet, examining chaplain to the Bishop of Oxford, who has more theological technique. Miss Dougall is a writer of ability, whose work is well worth reading.

The three parts taken together constitute an apologetic on somewhat new lines for the uniqueness of Christianity and the supremacy of Jesus as Lord of mind as well as of morals. Of late the eschatological interest has strongly characterized the literature dealing with the work of Christ. The central argument of this volume is designed to show that Jesus expected not a speedy and supernatural destruction of the world, but the termination of an order of society based on oppression,—"the result of his appeal to the Jews to fuse their fervid patriotism in a world-embracing zeal for the God he knew to be the father of all mankind." In support of this view a somewhat extended account is offered of the Jewish literature current at the beginning of the Christian era, with a critical examination of the eschatological passages in the first three gospels, as affording evidence of the strong CONTRAST between the teaching of Jesus and the religious thought common in his day. Part I portrays "The

World into which Jesus Came," and Part II "The Genius of Jesus," while Part III supplies "Critical Verification." Miss Dougall with a fine free style exhibits the historic Jesus as "the true and living revealer of the transcendent God," while Mr. Emmet emphasizes the thought that it requires "a greater faith to believe in the slow triumph of love than in the short-cut of a supernatural intervention," for the regeneration of the individual heart and the building up of a saved society must be "the slow and patient work of ages." We must allow creative (and regenerative) love to reach its goal by its own proper methods.

This is a possible view, and even those not inclined to accept it would derive much benefit and inspiration from a careful perusal of these two books in one.—C. A. S. D.

Reality of Jesus (The), by J. H. Chambers Macaulay. George H. Doran Co., New York. 251 pages. $1.75.

The author comes of a great ancestry of ministers. His charges have brought him into close and vital contact with men.

Jesus is set in relationship. Calvary had three crosses, not one. Is Jesus rejected, or is he accepted? Organized Christianity, especially as expressed in the church, is widely accused of unreality. Many who insist on this unreality asseverate the reality of Jesus.

The reality of Jesus as the reality of God in human life and experience is set forth in concrete yet poetic terms. The 25 chapters also develop the religion of Jesus, and Jesus today.

The chapter headings are original and interpretative, and the treatment satisfying and reassuring.—T. C.

Three Books by Dr. Hutton.

Our readers know Dr. John A. Hutton of Glasgow so well that no extended notice of his writings is needed here. The fact is, the demand for his books is so active that even some of his earlier volumes are being reprinted or imported from England.

Ancestral Voices. George H. Doran Co., New York. 263 pages. $1.75 net.

Essays provoked by the war, or the spirit and conditions that culminated in the war, that is, the conflict between the wisdom which was the fruit of the long travail of the race and the merely rationalistic and temporary way of conceiving man's true function in the world. Five papers are included on "The Sense of Sin in Great Literature," which exhibit Dr. Hutton at his best.

Our Ambiguous Life. Pilgrim Press, Boston. 252 pages. $2.25.

Twenty-eight essays with Biblical themes and backgrounds.

Winds of God (The). George H. Doran Co., New York. 104 pages. $1.25.

Five lectures delivered some years ago at Dr. Campbell Morgan's Mundesley conference, on the intercourse of thought with faith during the 19th century,—the cry of our time for its ancient peace. "The Winds of God" symbolize the fulness and resource added to the author's soul as he speaks.

Religion and Its Relations.

Religion of Science (The), by William H. Wood. Macmillan Co., New York. 176 pages. $1.50 net.

A trenchant and timely book. As a professer in Dartmouth College its author speaks with a certain authority and appeal of which men of science as well as intelligent laymen will feel the force. He is not in any offensive sense dogmatic, or vituperative, but knows that in any cause, good or bad, acid pens settle nothing. All the more on this account his cold, hard-reasoned, unsparing exhibit of the hopelessness of the attempt, now so common, to make a religion out of science alone carries conviction with a fair-minded reader. Against science as such no Christian man can have the slightest hostility, for did not his Lord make this world, and should we not study the phenomenal order which is generally, for want of a better name, called "nature"? The trouble comes not from any facts of science, if they be proved facts, but from the implicit and often pernicious philosophies which insidiously enwrap themselves in scientific discussions,—a point which cannot be illustrated within the limits of this review. Prof. Wood launches no polemic against science, but does show the barrenness and essential paganism of a science which allows for no personal God, no Bible, no incarnation, and no future life; meanwhile, like a revived Comtism, trying to put a ghostly (or ghastly) substitute on the altar of Jehovah from which all trace of personal and passionate religion has been removed.

The special points discussed by our author are the canons of matter, energy and mechanism, control of law, the "Bible" of nature, reason, evolution, man and the "real Christianity" ("Christianity," by the way, for some unexplained reason is spelled throughout this book with a small c). The volume claims to be the first statement in full form of the new "ism" (?) called the "Religion of Science," and also a critique of evolution. Dr. Wood's conclusion is that it "is stretching the truth beyond recognition to use the title religion of science or religion of evolution. To identify religion with science is to lose religion. Philosophy or theology not rooted in passion misses religion. Religion is rationalized when referred to sources of its own kind, not when reduced to some-

thing else." Moreover, social service is not the whole of religion, for Jesus demands service (as of the cup of water,) "in my name." "It seems as difficult for the intellectual as for the rich to enter the kingdom of God," adds Dr. Wood, yet men cannot worship law or force. Materialism has no evangel. Only the knowledge of God gives conquest of life, and the world still hungers for the "real Christianity," with God, man and immortality left not out, but in.—C. A. S. D.

Moral Life and Religion (The): A Study of Moral and Religious Personality, by James Ten Broeke. Macmillan Company, New York. 244 pages. $2.

This careful study by a professor of philosophy in McMaster University, Toronto, based on the postulate that experience, whether immediate or mediate, is always a unity, deals rather subtly with selected problems that concern the moral and religious consciousness. Religion, however, seems somewhat subordinated here to morality. The author frankly admits that his point of view is empirical, and largely psychological. Morality and religion are regarded biologically, as forms of behavior in response to the environment broadly conceived. (This term "biological" is growing very large of late. Will it ultimately swallow us all?)

Dr. Ten Broeke's contention that morality and religion promote and complete one another is no doubt sound, though when he says that "the moral consciousness passes naturally into the religious, which supplements and fulfils what is demanded by the moral," we wonder whether he is putting the cart before the horse. But even if we are not convinced of the truth of an evolutionary or naturalistic origin for morality and religion (for which we do not understand that our author argues), we may get much benefit from what is here said under the sub-topics of The Foundations of Character, Will and Character, The Moral Law and the Individual, Duties and Virtues, Goodness and Self-sacrifice, Moral Significance of Social Organization, Universality of the Religious Consciousness, Philosophy of Morals and Religion, and Moral and Religious Realism. The discussion of these and other associated questions is very able and penetrating. A naturally dry subject is handled in a clear, if not invariably convincing, style, while helpful references are added.

Of course the question will come whether morality even as an abstraction can be set off for consideration distinct from religion. The whole argument of this book is to show that they are interactive and mutually supplementary. It is only by a fiction of the imagination that we hypostatize morality into a running rival of religion. In concrete experience, of at least the majority, the two coalesce into one indistinguishable unity. (Ellwood and Ames, by the way, have some discussion in their works as to the possible or actual morality of non-religious persons in a religious community.) Still, ethical writers will go on talking about the moral life AND religion. But the fact that the only LIFE is moral, that is, pure and undefiled religion, is the conclusion of Dr. Ten Broeke, is shown by his concluding paragraph, in which he speaks of being "filled with the sense of the unsearchable depths of the divine nature as in mystic fashion one experiences union with Christ and God the Father." So morality and mysticism, being abstractly separable, are empirically and essentially one.—C. A. S. D.

Religion and Modern Thought, by George Galloway. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. 342 pages. $2.50.

This volume, made up of a series of essays written at different times and for various occasions, illustrates that ripe simplicity characteristic of many English theological works, with a sure (possibly at times too sure,) touch on philosophy and elemental mysteries.

Dr. Galloway treats concisely and quite sanely of the task and present problems of theology, some aspects of the religious outlook (assuming that religion has an outlook, as well as reason to look out), the bearing of religious experience on theological development, national religion (which has elements of value, but is not necessarily a final stage in the religious consciousness), the meaning and value of controversy, doctrines and philosophic thought, the personality of God, and religion and the supernatural. The influence of Kant on religious thought is critically and sympathetically evaluated, and thoughtful consideration given to the "essence of Christianity,"—which is declared to be a modern problem, and not to be defined in the form of something objective, unvarying and final. "What each age finds most deep and moving in the complex whole of Christian faith, that it declares to be essential Christianity," which judgment "has a relative justification," expressing the "essential meaning of Christianity for the life and thought of the age." This amounts to saying that Christianity is what you can get out of it. Exactly so, provided there be something stable underneath the flux of doctrinal thought, and a possibility and actuality of personal contact with the teacher and Saviour Christ which will keep the boasted "Christian consciousness" close to the facts of life, which root in the nature of God.

This thoughtful book has a number of excellencies of subject matter and style, and is to be particularly commended for its strong insistence on the fact that the spirit of religion can never perish from the world, but will reassert itself from age to age so long as man "cannot live by bread alone."—C. A. S. D.

For Preacher and Church Worker.

Christianity and Problems of Today: The Bross Library, Vol. XI. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. 159 pages. $1.25.

A composite book, with chapters by different writers, and therefore having the disadvantages of such a method of book-making. On the other hand, it has the advantages of a good cyclopedia, for experts write about things they are supposed to know. These lectures are a bit dry on the whole, and the same things can be found elsewhere in more attractive and appealing form, but that is not saying that these chapters are not well written and written about worthwhile things, for they are.—H. P.

Dramatic Instinct in Religious Education (The), by Thomas W. Galloway. Pilgrim Press, Boston. 115 pages. $1.75.

This book in small compass gives the theory and philosophy of the use of the drama in religious education, the history of an experiment in its use, many practical suggestions as to the method and detail of dramatizing the lessons of the church school, and five excellent and simple plays, based upon the Bible narrative and so far as possible using its language. The stories are those most naturally chosen for such a purpose, since they contain so large a measure of dramatic quality: The Good Samaritan, The Wise and Foolish Virgins, The Child Moses, Naaman's Quest, Joseph and His Brethren.

Dr. Galloway is wise in emphasizing the purpose of this method of religious education, "to develop the children, not the drama." The drama in the church school is simply a means to an end, and that end the opportunity of expression on the part of the pupil in matters of character. "The play is a mild kind of clinic or gymnasium in which right behavior is had under the most favorable conditions." Perhaps we might liken it to a laboratory, where under direction the student works out an experiment in good conduct, which thus makes an impression upon memory and mind and heart which the statement of the matter in a textbook could never secure.

Dr. Galloway approaches his subject with unusual preparation. After twenty years of teaching as professor of biology in colleges, he has become the associate director of educational activities in the American Social Hygiene Association. His book upon "The Use of Motive in Teaching Morals and Religion" will be well remembered.—L. M. N.

Introduction to the Study of the Mind (An), by Walter S. Athearn. Presbyterian Board of Publication. Philadelphia. 30 cents.

From Professor Athearn we have learned to expect useful writing in the field of religious education, that new science, so widely discussed and so little practised. This small volume will be of value to those who wish to lay its foundations well, either in their own thought or in the minds of others. The brief, terse paragraphs are packed with good material in the analysis of the important theme. The conclusion of the whole matter is in the appeal of the closing words:

"In this age of materialism, in the aftermath of a great world war, young men and women are flocking into the four lower groups of occupations, and there is great danger that there will not be enough workers in the upper groups to weave the warp of ideas and ideals which will hold civilization together. . . . . This whole book is a ringing challenge to you, reader, to dedicate your life to the higher levels and become a worker with the souls of men."—L. M. N.

Ministry as a Life Work (The), by Robert L. Webb. Macmillan Co., New York. 96 pages. $1.

In view of the decrease of candidates for the ministry, widespread throughout Protestant and Roman Catholic churches, this book ought to be put in the hands of young men who are seriously facing the question of their lifework. What greater proof can there be of the essential worldly spirit prevailing today in the so called Christian homes of America than the fact that banking, engineering, mercantile and other pursuits appeal to our boys in the vast majority of cases, while the unselfish, unremunerative, spiritual leadership possible to the ministry, with all its satisfactions, opportunities and unrivalled attractions, arouses but slight response in the heart of youth? If the visions of youth are material, will the dreams of our age be spiritual?

The writer does not overlook the economic and other discouragements of the ministry. He recognizes that many enter it without suitable physical, intellectual and spiritual qualifications. However, he sets forth with attractive phrase and convincing power the rewards and permanence of the work of the ministry, which are bound to make a profound appeal to a thoughtful Christian youth who wants best to invest his life and powers.—T. C.

Preaching and Sermon Construction, by Paul B. Bull. Macmillan Co., New York. 315 pages. $2.50.

The title should not be permitted to discourage a prospective reader by its suggestion of a textbook. For although this able and thorough treatment of the subject of homiletics is a good textbook, it is, to the preacher at least, most interesting and

entertaining. And its literary quality is of a high order.

In view of the recent suggestion of the honored founder of the Christian endeavor Society that the non-ritualistic churches are suffering from too much preaching, it is very interesting to have, from this author, a member of the Community of the Resurrection in the Church of England, such an earnest and challenging appeal for the exaltation of preaching as the method of discharging the prophetic office of the ministry. He hopes "to show that it is a disaster to religion when the office of prophet and priest become detached."

He states the aim of preaching as "the coming of the kingdom by the salvation of the soul, the glory of God by the conversion of man," it being thus twofold.

In view also of the widely advertised and apparently commercially profitable business of supplying ministers with sermons ready-made, and the disappearance of plagiarism from the catalogue of crimes now popularly recognized in the United States, some philanthropist could surely do a real service to the church and the world by circulating this volume among the patrons of the firms that agree to furnish sermons to one minister in any given region. For it sounds again the note which was so clear to our fathers, "No preaching will be of abiding power which is not drawn from the very heart of God."

The general standpoint of the author is very definitely stated in this prefatory note: "After a long ministry devoted to the conversion of souls I may be allowed to express my conviction that the supernatural is the essence of the gospel, and that a firm belief in the deity of Jesus Christ, the only-begotten virgin-born Son of God, is the only 'Word' which by the power of the Holy Spirit can regenerate the human race, and redeem us from the power of sin."

The book is full of the best help for the beginner and encouragement and stimulus for the veteran.—W. O. S.

Preaching the Social Gospel, by Ozora S. Davis. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 224 pages. $1.50 net.

With the changing centuries Christianity has run into a new world. Our gigantic industries, our new modes of transport, our great business houses and big cities, have revolutionized society. Whether we will or no, the church has a task very different from our fathers. The devil entrenched himself in the new conditions before the church became aware of the situation, so there has been constant change in church methods, and an increasing demand for a new note in the message of the pulpit that shall meet the needs of the hour. The cry is raised for a "social gospel." Many a minister with his Bible open before him wonders what it means. Must he become an expert in sociology, and if he does, must he preach on social problems?

Dr. Davis writes this book especially to ministers. It contains a practical program that may be followed through the church year so as to ensure the progressive presentation of the social message along with the right emphasis upon the individualistic appeal. He has done his work well. He believes in the power of the pulpit. He believes that the gospel is vastly enriched by its social unfolding. His program is very suggestive, full of quotations giving great variety of theme, stating the findings of masters in the fields reviewed.—S. C. H.

Sunday School at Work in Town and Country (The), by William Mouzon Brabham. George H. Doran Co., New York. 217 pages, illustrated. $1.50 net.

We should gladly place this book in the hands of a teacher or superintendent of a small Sunday school who was eager to promote his work.

The author is a layman who had experience as teacher and superintendent before being called into the Sunday school department of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. For 11 years he has been promoting better schools, chiefly among the small rural churches. Here we have a manual covering the whole ground so fully that teachers and executives everywhere can gain the benefit of his observation and experience.

The organization and personnel of the school, the material and teaching of the lesson, the building and its equipment, the program and membership, each receives detailed treatment. There are also chapters on workers' conferences and special occasions, organized classwork and the training of leaders, winning the life of the pupil and work for the whole school. In all this the small town or rural school, not exceeding 200 members, is in view.

A helpful feature is found in the photos of several church buildings new or remodeled to accommodate an organized school, with a dozen floor plans, etc. References for further reading, and questions for thought and discussion extend the suggestiveness of the book.

Historical and Biographical.

English and American Philosophy Since 1800, by Arthur Kenyon Rogers. Macmillan Co., New York. 468 pages. $3.50.

Dr. Rogers is favorably known for his excellent initial volume, the "Student's History of Philosophy." This is his most ambitious piece of work. He has endeavored in this enterprize to combine the factualness of the historian with the incisive criticism of the metaphysician. He admits that criticism has been his chief

interest in this work, but thinks that the best way to give an intelligible account of a philosophical doctrine is by pointing out its limitations and obscurities. His own standpoint is neither empiricism nor rationalism, but the assumption that belief rather than experience "is the starting-point of our cognitive contact with the world." The reply that belief may itself be a form of experience he meets by affirming that experience includes a reference to the natural setting within which life goes on. Logic is taken to be an instrument, and not the constitutive stuff out of which the world is made, while empiricism is "clearly guilty of a parodox when it denies the right of anything to set up as a fact unless it be a part of some human experience-process." Any fundamental criticism in philosophy must start with the acceptance of an attitude, which comes naturally to the human mind. Hence philosophy, for the purposes of this treatise, is taken in a somewhat restricted sense, the special philosophical disciplines receiving attention only as they have a bearing on those central and illuminating points of view which constitute the "philosophy" of the ordinary thinking man, though not of the man who thinks only in an ordinary way.

The contents of this substantial and very readable volume comprise a discussion of Scottish Realism, the Utilitarians, Authority and Reason in Theology, Naturalism and Evolution, Absolute Idealism, Personal Idealism, Pan-psychism and Realism, Pragmatism, and last (and least?) Neo-Realism. The amount of space given to these different schools, and to individuals referred to in the course of the keen analytical portrayals, is quite unequal. Dr. Rogers of course has a right to his own predilections and judgments in this matter of perspective, but it is disconcerting, if not amusing, to find only ten lines or so divided among Ladd, Bowne and Ormond (in a paragraph devoted to theistic idealism, which emphasizes the self as a source of the categories rendering reality intelligible), while eleven pages are devoted to G. E. Moore and several pages to various young thinkers whose philosophic beards are yet scarcely grown. It almost seems at times as though there were a conspiracy of silence among the more rationalistic modern American writers on philosophy against Christian apologists whose metaphysics is at least as good as theirs!

If allowance be made for the personal equation in the relative handling of authorities and themes, the reading of this important book will prove helpful to an understanding of the currents of thought, on both sides of the Atlantic, since 1800. Dr. Rogers is keen in his insights, if not perhaps broad enough in some of his outsights, and writes in a lucid, as well as cultured, style, which is a pleasure to peruse. The chief interest of his book perhaps lies in the presentation it gives of the most recent views in philosophy, although, for good reasons no doubt, he has not attempted a review of modern periodical literature. The real philosophical thinker, however, will probably be more attracted to the pages which analyze the positions of the high-peak metaphysicians and scientists such as Reid, Hamilton, J. S. Mill, Darwin and Royce, although some good things are said of the less significant poets or litterateurs such as Wordsworth, Coleridge, Matthew Arnold, Browning and Emerson, who are thrust in here among the prophets.

On the whole, Dr. Rogers has written a very attractive book. Two marked impressions will be left by its perusal on the thoughtful mind,—the bewildering variety of phase of a speculation which just lets itself go, and the utter weariness and hopeless vacuity of any "system" which fails to bring man, as a factor in an intelligible world, into vital contact with a Father-God who, in the person of his Son has put HIMSELF sympathetically and structurally into the promising process of human life.—C. A. S. D.

History of the Free Churchmen in Holland, by J. de Hoop Scheffer; edited by William Elliot Griffis. Andrus & Church, Ithaca, New York. 253 pages, illustrated.

A short, compact history of the Free Churches and Free Churchmen called the Brownists, Pilgrim Fathers, and Baptists, who went out from England and settled in the Netherlands, covering the period from 1581 to 1701.

The work is marked by thoroughness, exactness and precision. Dr. Scheffer was professor of Church History in the Mennonite College and in the University of Amsterdam, and had access to the archives of the cities of Amsterdam and Leyden, as well as of the Mennonite College and University of Amsterdam, in addition to many other sources. In this particular he is able to trace these immigrations from their beginning in the Low Countries, and to correct many dates and statements that have appeared in other works of the Pilgrim Fathers and Baptists especially. One is impressed by the scholarliness of the author. By the confessions of the various churches and by many controversial letters written during this period he is able to make a just appraisement of the various movements, and the tenets so tenaciously held.

The character studies of the various leaders are instructive and illuminating. It was a period in the history of the Free Churches of deep thinking and searching after truth, especially in trying to reach for a pure apostolic church government and belief. If some of this thinking is counted heretical and grotesque today, it shows at

least that some men were thinking deeply on religious truths. In view of the hardships these men suffered in England, and the reluctance with which they left the homeland, it is not to be wondered at that they were not as charitable as one might wish with one another. There was the atmosphere of the seventeenth century rather than of the twentieth century, and from that standpoint they must be appraised. For the most part they were university-trained men, and opened up rich veins of truth that have been developed by a later church, and to which we are indebted.

There are valuable appendices containing confessions of faith of the various churches, and some individual confessions of the leaders, with a list of passengers on the "Mayflower" and marriage records of the English settlers in Amsterdam.

A valuable historical work, well printed and ably edited.—J. H. C.

Oberlin, The Story of John Frederic, by Augustus Field Beard. Pilgrim Press, Boston. 196 pages, with frontispiece. 75 cents and $1.25.

Oberlin College: whence "Oberlin"? This biography tells the story of the distinguished French pastor, working in an obscure village in the Vosges Mountains, from whom came the name.

It is a remarkable story. Oberlin lived 1740-1826, but he was a hundred years ahead of his age in his thoughts and plans. Broadly evangelical and catholic in his Christian love, his ideas about social conditions, education, etc., would place him in the forefront of community church and betterment work today. So there is more than historical interest: there is the savor and example of a godly, practical life.

Pandita Ramabai Sarasvati, by Clementina Butler. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 94 pages, illustrated. $1 net.

Miss Butler has gathered together the leading facts regarding the life and work of this outstanding woman. We are told how she came into prominence among her own people, and how she was God's instrument in saving multitudes of India's child widows. The secret of her power may be caught by the earnest reader.

Various Themes.

Christian Crusade for a Warless World (The), by Sidney L. Gulick. Macmillan Co., New York. 197 pages. $1.

Dr. Gulick has compacted into this book sufficient ammunition for any one who wishes to fight for a warless world. The book is built on the statement of "International Ideals of the Churches of Christ" as adopted in 1921 by the Federal Council. Six of the chapters are given to a discussion of ideals that will create a warless world, such as racial and color tolerance and justice, international courts and boards of arbitration, and reduction of armaments. The finger is laid upon some of the world's open sores, such as traffic in narcotics, white slavery, and economic exploitation of weaker races.

The Appendix supplies an abundance of material for round table discussions and addresses championing this great movement. With an address list of 66 societies in the United States working for peace, and a bibliography, the manual is complete.—F. L. D.

Church on the Avenue (The), by Helen R. Martin. Dodd, Mead and Co., New York. 348 pages.

The story concerns itself principally with the position the church should take in modern industrial and social problems, two of the characters—ministers—presenting opposing arguments on this subject. The book is, indeed, a brief for the entrance of the church and its ministry into this troubled field on the side of the laboring class. The author bases her arguments for this stand on the example of Christ and on the doctrine of brotherhood as taught in the Christian religion.

The character of the minister who believes in neutrality and compromise, and allows himself to be completely dominated by the financial magnates of his church, is made to suffer much by contrast.

The scene is laid in a small Pennsylvania Dutch town which is practically "owned" by Jacob Leiter. The book is exceedingly interesting, has a number of well drawn characters, some love element, and a bit of mystery. It is a scathing, biassed criticism of the church, but written apparently with a constructive rather than a destructive object.—C. B. W.

Dream of Pilate's Wife (The), by William Hervey Woods. Presbyterian Committee of Publication, Richmond, Va. 24 pages.

A most attractively bound and printed little play. We have often wondered that truly religious plays have not been written in larger number. Here at any rate is a beginning. In some of our churches we find our young people eager for anything that has to do with the drama. Instead of suppressing this God-given instinct, why not lead it into right and high paths? Instead of giving, for the benefit of the parish house, a play entitled "How Onions Smell," why not give them a play, a real one, written along sacred lines, that will make the Bible real and its characters alive? This little play is an attempt in the right direction, and we hope it will have many successes.—H. P.

Florence Nightingale: A Play in Three Acts, by Edith Gittings Reid. Mac-

millan Co., New York. 118 pages. $1.25.

A play which has the enthusiastic praise of Dr. Henry Van Dyke and Mary Anderson de Navarro begins life under favorable auspices, and is sure to win further commendation.

This generation has known too little of the real Florence Nightingale. Longfellow's picture of "The Lady with the Lamp" is touchingly significant, and has fresh meaning in the last decade of war and suffering. But it is shadowy at best, and the strong personality of Florence Nightingale deserves clearer outlines. Mr. Strachey's sketch of her in "Eminent Victorians" is valuable, but his tendency is iconoclastic to such a degree that he is almost merciless, a state of mind not conducive to either the understanding or portrayal of a character.

The author of this play has made a careful but a sympathetic study of the great woman whose name it bears, and whose intense qualities were the endowment which her task required in the reluctant time in which she came to the rescue of the wounded from unrelieved suffering in the hospitals and on the battlefields of the Crimea. It is but a just tribute from our own generation, which owes to her a large debt, to study her character and her almost miraculous achievement. This play gives us excellent opportunity.

The only unsuccessful drawing in it is the one imaginary person depicted, the supposed lover, who certainly would hardly charm any one away even from the Crimea in wartime. Possibly in Margot Asquith's racy stories of English society material for a character of more stalwart proportions might have been discovered.—L. M. N.

Glory of His Robe (The), by Edward John Stobo. George H. Doran Co., New York. 269 pages. $1.50 net.

A quotation from Bliss Carman, referring to the burning fires of sunset, furnishes the title of this book.

Its contents are 50 short chapters, meditations or homilies on different topics. Sometimes they are Scriptural, as, for instance, "The Fact of Conversion," "How God Comforts," "Martha, the Home-maker"; but most are on anyday themes, such as "The Worth of a Smile," "The Essence of Profanity," "Foresight and Hindsight."

The author does not begin with a text, but he never ends without a Scriptural and spiritual message arising out of the topic. There are lots of anecdotes and personal applications. The short chapters invite one to occupy spare minutes or the quiet time with these thoughtful, practical themes.

Let's Play, by Edna Geister. George H. Doran Co., New York. 152 pages. $1.25 net.

Another volume by this expert entertainer, this time with special reference to children. Games are classified for indoors and outdoors, large groups and small, parties and picnics, active and quiet, while a closing chapter makes suggestions for Christmas, Valentine's Day, and other definite occasions.

Magyars in America (The), by D. A. Souders. George H. Doran Co., New York. 149 pages, illustrated. $1 net.

Volume 6 in the racial studies called the New American Series.

Just who are the Magyars? Well, the Census of 1920 reported 473,538 of them in the United States, distributed in every state, more or less. This volume discusses their European background and history, their civic and religious conditions over here, with the usual problems and possibilities.

The illustrations show churches and congregations, schools and classes and other visible proofs of the activities of this racial group.

Matter and Spirit: A Study of Mind and Body in their Relation to the Spiritual Life, by James Bissett Pratt. Macmillan Co., New York. 232 pages. $1.50.

Dr. Pratt will certainly by this book add to his reputation as a vigorous thinker and clear analyst of contemporary currents (or eddies) of thought.

Assuming that the mind-body problem is central in metaphysics,—or that, indeed, metaphysics centers around a process that is going on within the psychophysical organism of each man at every moment of his waking life,—he discusses critically four possible explanations of this relation: first, mind and body may mutually influence each other (Interactionism); second, body may alone be causally effective, and mind merely a result (Materialism); third, mind and body may flow on parallel with each other (Psychophysical Parallelism); fourth, mind alone may be efficient, and body merely a resultant or appearance of mind (Idealistic Parallelism). Under Parallelism in general is subsumed by its advocates a Double-Aspect Theory, where each is an aspect of the other (whatever that may mean), or each an aspect of a tertium quid, which is at least more thinkable.

Dr. Pratt discusses in turn the Mind-Body Problem and the Materialistic Solution, Parallelism, the Denial of the Problem, the Difficulties of Interaction, a Dualism of Process, and the Consequences of Dualism in Morality and Religion. A New Materialism is discriminated,—a view held by some psychologists who are not really philosophers,—and found to be in no better case than the old. Parallelism, Behaviorism and Objective Idealism are all regarded as inadmissible, and a sort of Interaction, carrying with it the conception of a dualism of process within the universe, and the reality, responsibility and freedom of the self, held to be the true solution. Dr.

Prof. James Bissett Pratt.

Pratt thinks that what the times call for in philosophy is not a personal idealism but a personal realism which teaches that the world of matter and the world of spirit are "not made of the same stuff."

It might be hypercritical to object to the use of the term "matter" here (or anywhere), since that figment has been reduced in the physical laboratories to electrons, radioactivity or what not, so that what has commonly been called "matter" now connotes "force," yet in any case some kind of objective system exterior in a sense and way to man. The realists indulge in a broad humor at the expense of the personal idealist who is sliding down an inclined plane into the jaws of a pantheistic crocodile at the base, and our author does well to try to save a place for a real human self in a workable universe.

The concluding chapter is written on a high plane of thought as well as of aspiration, for Dr. Pratt's sympathies are truly religious, in that they would make us to be of good hope about the future, and his conclusion is: "I am a child of earth. Yes, that is plain, alas! All too plain; but a child of starry heaven too." The body is then the tool of the mind, and the workman will outlast his work.

In these days of "tuppeny" thinking about spiritual values by men who manifest an unaccountable and uncanny interest in proving that they themselves will not exist beyond this life, such a book as this is intellectually invigorating and morally inspiring.—C. A. S. D.

Midst Volcanic Fires, by Maurice Frater. Pilgrim Press, Boston. 288 pages, illustrated. $2.25.

The first chapter gives a thrilling account of the eruption of Mount Benbow in 1913, when Ambrin hospital was destroyed and submerged under 20 feet of sea water. The rest of the book gives intimate sketches of missionary travels and labors, native converts and heathen, and glimpses of life in general in the New Hebrides.

Modern Cyclopedia of Illustrations for All Occasions (A), by G. B. F. Hallock. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 448 pages. $3 net.

Another cyclopedia by a long-time and industrious clipper, who has the ability to sense the value of a story or quotation.

The 1841 illustrations, few over a column long, follow the outstanding days of the year: thus Christmas 135 selections, New Year 137, Epiphany, Young People's Day, and so on to Thanksgiving. There is plenty of variety, suggestion and freshness under every section.

Unity and Rome, by Edmund Smith Middleton. Macmillan Co., New York. 269 pages. $1.75.

"To Saint Peter, Prince of the Apostles to whom Christ gave the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, this volume is humbly dedicated by the author," who is, or was at the time of writing, which is given as "Pre-Lent 1922," a clergyman of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

In view of this fact it is well, indeed, that in concluding the preface he should give the following interesting information: "The author begs to say that nothing in the present volume should be construed as disloyal to the Church whose Orders he bears."

These words should, of course, be taken at their face value, for they are the assertion of the personal attitude of the author. But if this preface should ever be destroyed it will be difficult for the reader of the book to infer any such thing. Indeed, it would not be a misapplication of the recognized principles of higher criticism to conclude that the preface was written by a "different hand" from that which wrote the book itself, probably from a motive of, say, "Protestant interest." For on page 21 it is written, "None of the special prerogatives granted to St. Peter individually are shared by his colleagues. There are to be twelve sources of apostolic labors and mission, but only one source of primacy. Unity proceeds from one."

Likewise, also, the service of Peter as bishop of Rome is accepted, and the "primacy" of that see is earnestly defended. And, finally, "As we come to the end of this

part of the present volume, we cannot but repeat the two dominant thoughts which have been in the mind of the writer throughout. The first is that there can be no true unity without Rome. That fact should be clearly recognized by the leaders of the present movement [for unity], whether Anglican, Eastern, or sectarian. Without Rome efforts towards unity will be in vain, and for the very simple and obvious reason that the bishop of Rome is the primate of the whole church (not simply the patriarch of the Western church, as some assert, but the shepherd of the entire flock of Christ). The second dominant thought in the author's mind is the necessity of bringing Rome actively into the discussion of unity. Nay, we will go further. In that discussion Rome must take the first place, because it is hers of divine right." He also apparently assents to the doctrine of papal infallibility.

A review such as this is not the proper vehicle for a controversial discussion, and I shall conclude it by merely adding that the author seems to think that the commonplaces of patristic church history are unknown to Protestant historians. He is at pains to express this idea as he quotes the writings of fathers and the decrees of councils.

That he can so diligently and enthusiastically thresh over so much old straw and chaff is only a little less amazing than his continuing in the ministry of the Protestant Episcopal Church,—if he is still there.—W. O. S.

When You Enlist, by Margaret Slattery. Pilgrim Press, Boston. 112 pages. 75 cents.

Church history told under the figure of a military army: its recruiting, early conflict, victories and weaknesses and vicissitudes during the centuries up to now. A gift book or textbook for young people joining the church.

Within the Gateways of the Far East, by Charles R. Erdman. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 128 pages, illustrated. $1.25.

A newsletter, with sections devoted to the outward journey (with stop-over at the Hawaiian Islands), China, Korea, Japan, and the homeward voyage.

The guidebook idea is not attempted; rather, we have a chatty account of what a keen, sympathetic observer would see and hear while visiting and traveling with those who are familiar with the lands mentioned. Dr. Erdman has so many friends among the missionaries that he was specially favored, and made the most of his time. With no pretence of arguing things at length he usually gives a compressed balanced judgment on the problems of the moment, and cues to probable future development.

World's Great Religious Poetry (The), compiled by Caroline Miles Hill. Macmillan Co., New York. 836 pages. $5.

A collection like this awakens mixed feelings and opinions. Of course it contains most of the unchallenged gems of English-language religious poetry, but not every one will agree with the inclusion of Carl Sandburg's output, for instance, as either "great," "religious," or even "poetry." One misses so many pieces that would so much better fill the space.

This anthology includes several Bible and American Indian and East Indian selections, and is especially strong in native American verse, living poets being well represented. But Italian, German, French and other "world" poetry are scarcely represented.

The orderly arrangement of poems under a dozen main heads, from "Inspiration" and "The Search after God" to "The Nature of the Future Life," is helpful, and complete information as to authorship is intended to be given. But there are too many printer's errors, words dropped, and other flaws for a first class publication. Why are the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis marked "Anonymous"?

Yellow Butterflies, by Mary Raymond Shipman Andrews. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. 73 pages.

A tender story of a mother's love and pride in her son, in childhood and in the war. The agony of "Missing," and the assurance that the Unknown Soldier was Dick, compel deep sympathy for the mother, who saw in yellow butterflies at certain crises the sign and promise of immortality.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

At the Master's Feet, by Sadhu Sundar Singh. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 90 pages. 75 cents.

In the form of a dialogue between himself and his Master the Sadhu tells truths that have been revealed to him about God's presence, sin and salvation, prayer, service, the cross and the mystery of suffering, heaven and hell. Usually the teaching is based on Scripture, but often it is in Oriental story form. Heaven and hell are said to be spiritual states, here and hereafter, but otherwise the teaching is conventional, with a clear positive message.

A quiet, spiritual, mystical atmosphere pervades the book.

Being A Preacher, by James I. Vance. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 171 pages. $1.25 net.

Bells of St. Stephens (The), by Marian Keith. George H. Doran Co., New York. 356 pages. $1.75 net.

Best I Remember (The), by Arthur Porritt. George H. Doran Co., New York. 253 pages. $3 net.

Chronology of the Bible (The), by Philip Mauro. George H. Doran Co., New York. 120 pages. $1 net.

Commended in our issue of last December as a challenge to every honest, open-minded Bible student regarding God's purpose in revelation.

Common Sense Religion, by Frank E. Wilson. Macmillan Co.,New York. 167 pages. $1.50.

Fifth Horseman (The), by Robert Hugh Morris. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 160 pages. $1.25 net.

Hebrew Prophet and the Modern Preacher (The), by Henry J. Pickett. George H. Doran Co., New York. 284 pages. $2.50 net.

He Opened to Us the Scriptures, by Benjamin W. Bacon. Macmillan Co., New York. 116 pages. $1.

History of Utopian Thought, by Joyce Oramel Hertzler. Macmillan Co., New York. 321 pages. $3.

Introduction to the Psychology of Religion (An), by Robert H. Thouless. Macmillan Co., New York. 286 pages. $2.50.

Jew and His Mission (The), by Henry Ostrom. Bible Institute Colportage Association, Chicago. 157 pages. $1.25 net.

Let's Play, by Edna Geister. George H. Doran Co., New York. 152 pages. $1.25 net.

Life of Christ, by Giovanni Papini. Translated by Dorothy Canfield Fisher. Harcourt, Brace and Co., New York.

Meaning of the Old Testament (The), by Hugh Martin. George H. Doran Co., New York. 170 pages. $1.60 net.

Middle of the Road (The), by Philip Gibbs. George H. Doran Co., New York. 428 pages. $2 net.

Night Scenes of Scripture, by Norman Macleod Caie. George H. Doran Co., New York. 199 pages. $1.25 net.

Prayer as a Force, by A. Maude Royden. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York. 132 pages.

Religion and Biology, by Ernest E. Unwin. George H. Doran Co., New York. 185 pages.

Religious Foundations, edited by Rufus M. Jones. Macmillan Co., New York. 144 pages. $1.

St. Mark's Life of Jesus, by Theodore H. Robinson. George H. Doran Co., New York. 134 pages. $1.75 net.

Servant of Jehovah (The): An Exposition of Isaiah 53, by David Baron. George H. Doran Co., New York. 158 pages. $2 net.
Doran's reprint of a scholarly and spiritual study, showing that the Servant of Jehovah of Isaiah 53 is Messiah, in his sufferings and glory.

Seven Deadly Sins (The), by Norman Macleod Caie. George H. Doran Co., New York. 96 pages. $1 net.

Short History of Our Religion (A), by D. C. Somervell. Macmillan Co., New York. 347 pages. $1.75.

Sonny an' Me, by M. Sinclair Middlemiss. Christian Alliance Publishing Co., Brooklyn. 93 pages, illustrated. 75 cents.

Visions of the End, by Adam C. Welch. Pilgrim Press, Boston. 259 pages. $2.25.

Waste of Sin (The), by W. W. Melton. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 170 pages. $1.25 net.

World's Best Humorous Anecdotes (The), compiled by J. Gilchrist Lawson. George H. Doran Co., New York. 275 pages. $2 net.

ALSO RECEIVED.

He Is the Son of God, by Linwood Taft. Pilgrim Press, Boston. 32 pages. 35 cents.
A playlet on the last week of our Lord's life, in which a Jewish lady of orthodox training in Jerusalem is led by the events that culminated in the resurrection to recognize Jesus as Son of God. Directions for staging are given.

The Vine, by Homera Homer-Dixon. Bible Institute Colportage Association, Chicago. 63 pages.
The parable of John 15. 1-8 meticulously expounded and applied in relation to abiding in Christ, with special message for suffering believers.

The Deity of Christ, by Robert E. Speer. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 64 pages. 25 cents.
A new edition of this Northfield address, with three supplementary notes on Christ's self-assertion and lowliness, the inadequacy of the Unitarian view, and Prof. Edward Everett Hale's acknowledgment of Jesus Christ as a living Saviour.

The Easter People, by Winifred Kirkland. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 61 pages, illustrated, decorated cover. 50 cents.
A narrative of rare beauty describing the Good Friday and Easter celebrations of the God-fearing Moravians in Salem, N. Car. There is the flavor of oldtime piety and sincerity in the local descriptions and historical reminiscences.

His Glory, by Grant Stroh. Bible Institute Colportage Association, Chicago. 63 pages. 40 cents.
With John 1. 14 as text the author explores the theme of our Lord's glory in its pristine, Jehovistic, incarnate, present and future aspects, from Biblical sources, of course.
Surely there is no theme that ought to stir the believer's heart more than this, as he contemplates his Lord!

The Lion of the Tribe of Judah, by Rev. F. S. Eastman, Salem, O.
The deeper meaning and spiritual significance of Masonry, in brief.

Prayer Brings Results, by Lewis J. Lederer. Maryland Tract Society, Baltimore, Md. 4 pages.
In 1889 a Y secretary was needed in Baltimore. After a month of prayer the board found their man, and the answer widened out into a successful Christian ministry.

Presbyterian Handbook. Presbyterian Board of Publication, Philadelphia. 96 pages. 10 cents.
Presbyterian official data, International S. S. and C. E. topics, and other useful information.

Christianity and the Church. 7 pages.
The Sacraments of the Church. 11 pages.
Salvation. 10 pages.
Sin. 9 pages.
Reprints of chapters from "Our reasonable Faith," by Park Hayes Miller, published at three cents each by the Presbyterian Board of Publication, Philadelphia.

The Fossils as Age-markers in Geology, by George McCready Price.
A 30-page reprint from the "Princeton Theological Review," challenging some of the wild men among the geologists.

The Meaning of Church Membership, by Raymond Calkins. Pilgrim Press, Boston. 14 pages. 25 cents.
An attractive booklet to give to a person on joining the church, containing a blank certificate of membership, pastoral injunctions about the Bible, prayer, the church and service, and prayers and Bible readings for the young Christian.

Any book acknowledged, reviewed, or advertised in this magazine will be forwarded postpaid by the publishers of the RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK upon receipt of the advertised price. Remit by check, postal or express order, or by currency. Do not send stamps.

"Good actions," said the pretty Sunday school teacher, "are the lovely flowers. Bad ones are the weeds. Now can any little boy or girl tell me the difference between flowers and weeds?"

"Weeds," said little Louis, who for many days had been struggling manfully with the sorrel found in his mother's garden, "are the plants that want to grow, and flowers are the ones that don't."—Country Gentleman.

SOME SERMON SERIES.

Are you considering a series of sermons? May we suggest:

The Utter Hopelessness of Humanity without Christ;

Our Tragic Alienation from Almighty God;

The All-Sufficient Saviourhood of Our Risen Lord;

A Spirit-born Conviction for Sins;

The Divine Grace of Real Repentance;

Undivided Trust in the All-Atoning Lamb of God;

The Experience of Sin Forgiven;

The Inward Illumination of the Holy Spirit;

The Daily Ordering of Our Steps by Him;

Our Hope of Immortality.

—Northwestern Christian Advocate.

Pointed Problems for Plain People.

Is Rome the Oldest Church? An Interpretation of History;

Is Protestantism Hopelessly Divided? An Interpretation of Liberty;

Is the Bible an Inspired Book? An Interpretation of Literature;

Is There a Personal Devil? An Interpretation of Evil;

Is There an Eternal Hell? An Interpretation of Penalty;

Is the World Growing Better? An Interpretation of Influence;

Is There an Unpardonable Sin? An Interpretation of Character.

Misplaced Culture.

There are some people who put culture in the place of a new birth, wrote the late D. L. Moody. Culture is all right in its place, but culture will not admit anyone into heaven.

Suppose I have a field, and begin to plow it the first day of April. First I plow it one way, then I plow it crosswise. Then I plow it again, and harrow it, and roll it, and brush it, and cultivate it, working at it six days in the week from April to October.

My neighbor comes along and says: "Moody, what are you doing in that field?"

"I am cultivating it."

"What! Are you going to put nothing in it?"

"No, I believe in a high state of cultivation."

My neighbor would laugh at me for my folly. Yet that is just what people are doing who are substituting culture for conversion. Unless the seed is sown in the field its cultivation will amount to nothing. Unless the grace of God is planted in the heart we cannot see the kingdom of God.

"Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again!"

Receipts, Jan. 15 to Feb. 15.

Labrador (Dr. W. T. Grenfell).

17247.....$ 10 00 17254.....$ 2 50

Spring Memorial Gardens, East Northfield, Mass.

17249 .....$ 2 00

Gift Subscription Fund.

Contributions are invited to send this magazine free to missionaries, and in special cases. Many requests reach our office. Any sum, small or large, will be welcome.

17243..$ 6 00	17253..$ 2 00	17261..$ 4 00
17244.. 2 00	17255.. 3 00	17262.. 1 00
17245.. 1 00	17256.. 1 00	17263.. 6 00
17246.. 10 00	17257.. 1 00	17264.. 5 00
17248.. 4 00	17258.. 80	17265.. 3 00
17250.. 2 00	17259.. 10 00	17266.. 3 00
17251.. 2 00	17260.. 4 00	17267.. 2 00
17252.. 1 00		17268.. 1 00

Dear Sir and Brother,

I have just finished reading the December number of the Record of Christian Work, and it occurs to me that I should make acknowledgment of the pleasure and benefit the magazine has been to me throughout another year.

Two years before coming to Peru I was a subscriber to the Record, and now, during the fourteen years I have been in this work, there was only one brief interval that I have not received it also. It has become invaluable to me. There are two phases of the materials of the magazine that I prize highly,—the news of the progress of the work in the great world field, of all the denominations, and the inspirational matter that is contained in various departments. I do not think that I exaggerate when I say that half the sermons I preach are based upon ideas and inspirations that come to me with the reading of the Record of Christian Work.

Wishing for you and for the Record a prosperous and happy New Year, I am,

Yours fraternally,

(Rev.) Hays P. Archerd.

GREAT MEN AND WOMEN OF THE BIBLE.

International Sunday School Lessons.

April 1. The Walk to Emmaus.

Luke 24. Lesson portion, 13-31.

The narrative makes this homely post-resurrection episode as real and vivid as any that took place during the natural life of our Lord. Did Luke get it from one of those present?

It sets before us, first, some negative discussion about the resurrection; then THE RISEN CHRIST HIMSELF. Know him risen from the dead, and questions about his resurrection give no trouble.

The dubious disciples.

Notice the attitude of the two toward the fact of our Lord's resurrection.

They expected it not, and were leaving Jerusalem in this unexpectant mood, even though they were keen about the crucifixion and other events of the past week.

There was no collusion: they differed and disputed between themselves.

What hope they had had in Jesus as redeemer of Israel had collapsed.

They did not believe the news brought by the women, about the body being missing from the tomb and about the angels who declared Lord Jesus was alive again.

They did not deny, but they did not heed even the word of those who checked up the news brought by the women.

Could there be less fertile soil for fictitious stories of the resurrection to grow in? Is it believable that people in such a negative state of mind would invent the story?

The risen Christ.

He is real, though different.

His method with the two was not at first to open their eyes to know him, but to build up their faith in Messiah out of their Scriptures; not primarily out of their personal experience.

First he led them by his questions to tell just where they stood. His verdict convicted them of slowness of heart to believe their Bible. Doubt must be given concrete expression before you can determine the cause of it and the cure for it.

He began with Moses,—the right place to begin,—and went through the whole Old Testament interpreting to them all the passages that referred to himself as Messiah. Will any genuine disciple of Jesus dare to say that now in his risen life he was limited in his knowledge about the Scriptures like any ordinary Jew, as some say he was limited in his natural life?

Yet the eyes of the two were not opened to know Lord Jesus as he opened up the Scriptures, but rather after he had finished and was blessing and breaking the loaf (35). HIMSELF, not even their Bible, was the secret and source of their recognition. This is still true.

In a day when the character and value of the Bible are being so seriously discussed, let us note the use our risen Lord made of the Old Testament: how he quickened the disciples' hearts' faith and warmed their hearts by expounding it.

Arguments and opinions about the resurrection are likely to continue without end. Contact with the risen Christ gives the certainty we crave.

It is often in the disappointments of life that Lord Jesus becomes most real to us.

April 8. Abraham, the Hero of Faith.

Genesis 12 to 25. 8; Hebrews 11. 8-19. Lesson portion, Genesis 12. 1-5; Hebrews 11. 8-10, 17-19.

Introductory note.

We now enter upon a six months' course entitled "Great Men and Women of the Bible," divided equally between Old and New Testament characters. Only one lesson is given to each person. While the Scripture references contain a survey of the person's whole life, the lesson portion to be printed confines itself to some outstanding incident or characteristic of that person. The task before the teacher, then, is to review the person's whole life while specially driving home the traits that made that person great in God's estimate.

The course offers unusual variety of material, but it will demand earnest preparation on the teacher's part to master the material well enough to be able to present a clear-cut, concrete picture to the class. Avoid loose ends. Condense your thoughts and plans. Finish your subject before the bell rings, as it will be a new subject the following Sunday.

Here at a glance are the sketches for this quarter.

Abraham, the Hero of Faith;
Joseph, Preserver of His People;
Moses, Liberator and Lawgiver;
Ruth, the Faithful Daughter;
Samuel, Judge and Prophet;
David, the Poet-King;
Elijah, the Brave Reformer;
Isaiah, the Statesman-Prophet;
Jeremiah, Prophet of Courage;
Nehemiah, the Bold Builder;
Esther, the Patriot Queen.

Abraham a real man.

Impress upon the class that we are not studying fairy tales, but the life story of a real man. Every day brings new evidence of the historical reliability of the Bible. The war brought the ancient Bible lands into the newspapers. Railroads were built in Mesopotamia, and there is a railroad depot at Ur. Archeologists have discovered much about ancient Ur. Inscriptions have been found containing the names Abram and Abraham; not the Bible Abraham, however, as yet.

Use the map,—an up-to-date map such as has been published in the "Literary Digest."

Abraham's faith.

The narrative tells nothing about who or what Abraham was, and we should never have heard of him if God had not commanded him to leave his homeland and emigrate to another land. With the command went rich promises of personal and world-wide blessing (Genesis 12. 1-3).

But God's command must be matched by man's response. Abraham went out as commanded, and the secret of his obedience is what made him great, namely, his faith in God.

The passage in Hebrews shows the value or power of his faith in a threefold way.

It was faith that nerved him to go forth although he did not know his destination. But he did know his Guide.

It was faith that not only gave him this initial impulse, but that kept him true to God through the long years of sojourn in a foreign land. It sometimes takes more heroism to hang on than to get started. Abraham's whole after-life was colored by his faith.

It was faith that presently led to his surrender to death of his miraculously-given son Isaac, through whom alone the wonderful promises of God could find fulfilment. He stood the supreme test.

Looking back 4,000 years we see that in Abraham's obedience of faith lay the narrowing of the Messianic promise to his family line: the isolation of Abraham from his idolatrous surroundings (Joshua 24. 2) in order to become the friend of God and father of the faithful; the beginning of the Jewish race, God's Chosen People. All the rest of the Bible is the selective history of the family of this hero, this pioneer, this flesh and blood personification of faith in the living God.

April 15. Joseph, Preserver of His People.

Lesson portion, Genesis 45. 3-15.

The passage before us is the climax of the story of Joseph as told in Genesis 30. 22-24; 37 to 50. He is one of the few blameless characters in the Bible whose story is told at any length. What adventures he had, what ups and downs! This scene in which he reveals himself to his brothers is one of the most affecting in all literature.

His rôle as preserver of his people was realized by reason of three factors: his administrative ability, his filial and fraternal loyalty, and the providence of God.

Administrative ability.

Joseph was at the apex of political power. Step by step he has been promoted to the position of economic dictator, the Hoover of his day. We may say that he was the greatest man on earth; and recent discoveries in Egypt indicate the splendor of its civilization in that era.

His public career is conspicuous for moral stamina, far-sighted planning, honest and humanitarian dealing.

Filial and fraternal loyalty.

Yonder in Canaan they are feeling the pinch of famine, and necessity renews contact between Jacob's family and Joseph after the lapse of 22 years. Joseph employs a series of tests presumably to determine their present character. Judah's earnest plea for self-substitution in Benjamin's place because of the dreaded effect upon their old father is more than Joseph can bear. He can maintain his reserve and incognito no longer.

Not a word of reproach for the cruel past, not a thought of exacting satisfaction for the injustice he had suffered, not a suggestion of discarding the ties of kindred; but a burst of emotion revealing a heart hungry for his father, forgiveness full and free, tenderness unexpected in such a quarter, and generous provision for the days to come!

The providence of God.

But here, as in earlier crises in his career, Joseph claims for himself no special credit. His present position of power is not the result of luck, nor of Oriental intrigue, nor even of Pharaoh's good will. Behind and overruling all his circumstances he is conscious of GOD. Alone of Jacob's sons he seems to have taken God into account. Here is his own interpretation of his life:

"GOD did send me before you to preserve life,"—three times repeated, verses 5, 7, 8;

"GOD hath made me lord of all Egypt," 9.

Behold the mystery in evil: how wicked men may accomplish God's purposes! All Joseph's suffering and slavery, the prison and the palace, had been lightened by the consciousness of God's good purposes.

Happy is the man who can see the true interpretation of any providence when he is passing through it!

America needs Josephs,—public servants of incorruptible character, of statesmanlike capacities, ever conscious of God's overruling presence.

April 22. Moses, Liberator and Lawgiver.

Lesson portion, Exodus 14. 10-22.

The book of Genesis ends in "a coffin in Egypt." But that coffin was prophetic, for it spoke of God's help and of return to the Promised Land (Genesis 50. 24, 25). Exodus opens with Israel still in Egypt, but with changed fortunes: they have sunk into servitude. This is the background of the life of Moses.

Genesis is a collection of biographies of individuals and clans. Exodus is the story of the birth and organization of the Hebrew nation. Certain individuals stand out as the agents of God. Among them Moses is the

3591

Abraham Lincoln of his race, freeing them from bitter bondage. Indeed, he is their George Washington too, casting off a foreign yoke and becoming a nation builder.

The review of his life will be easy, as the narrative is continuous and compact from his peril-fraught birth to his pathetic but glorious death. Reared by his mother-nurse in the faith of Jehovah, adopted into the royal family and enjoying the highest culture of Egypt, his call and commission by God come at the age of eighty, and his great constructive work is done in the next 40 years. Picture him as patriot, statesman, general, religious leader and organizer, author. When on the Mount of Transfiguration law and prophecy met in him in whom they were fulfilled, Moses was there to confer with Lord Jesus about the exodus that he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. No man in the Bible enters so largely into the life of Jew and Gentile today as Moses. Read Exodus 2 to 19; 32 and 33; Deuteronomy 34. 1-8, for the leading facts of his life; also Hebrews 11. 23-29 for a succinct statement of his secret motive.

Passage of the Red Sea.

The death of the first-born has broken Pharaoh's obstinate will. Israel is on the march, between two and three millions in number. Our lesson portion finds them in threatening environment. No wonder they were panic-stricken. But God answers their cry, and saves them.

Don't waste time speculating on how it all happened. Let the simple record, with its intervention of the supernatural, have right of way rather than inconclusive guesswork.

The lesson for us to learn is, when to stand still and when to go forward; when to wait on God and for God and when to use personal initiative and all available means. It is when we get into dire extremity that we see most clearly the salvation of our God.

Leader and liberator.

Last week in the study of Joseph we learnt that God was unseen in the background. Today's lesson puts Jehovah in the foreground. The supreme significance of the Red Sea passage is that it became henceforth a standard of God's power.

This defines Moses' position: it is something new in God's relation to Israel. Moses is God's agent and spokesman, his middleman. Without underestimating Moses' great qualities we must still say that he was only the instrument of God. He did not act on his own authority, he did not initiate legislation, he did not conceive the tabernacle: all his power, plans, authority, were derived direct from God. His part was to transmute God's instructions into ritual and law and institutions.

But be sure of this: that God could use him thus is the highest possible tribute to his character and faith.

April 29. Ruth, the Faithful Daughter.

Lesson portion, Ruth 1. 14-22.

The lesson title emphasizes an element in Ruth's character which is rather unusual in the study of that lovely personality. Would it not mean even more if it had designated Ruth as "the faithful daughter-in-law"? It is only natural that a girl should be faithful in her love and care of her aging mother, but not every young wife or widow is loving and dutiful toward her mother-in-law.

Let us make a special point of this in today's lesson. How did Ruth show her filial faithfulness?

First, in her lifelong determination to make Naomi's path, and land, and people, and God, her own.

What was there in Naomi that led Ruth to cleave to her with whole-hearted committal? How far had the dead men folk commended their people to this foreigner? How far had their family piety commended their God to this heathen girl? Above and beyond all there must have been something compelling in Naomi herself, for she was now stripped of everything external. Orpah showed her affection equally with Ruth, but Ruth was determined to risk all in inseparable love.

Then, with faithful adherence to this determination, in her brave struggle against poverty.

It was Ruth's industry, and kindness to her mother-in-law, and piety, that first impressed Boaz (2. 11, 12), and led to the romance of marriage. The girl that has these admirable qualities is certainly more likely to make a good wife than the girl who lacks them.

Lastly, Ruth's marriage filled Naomi's cup of happiness.

Naomi had returned to Bethlehem embittered by her losses. "I went out full, and Jehovah hath brought me home again empty" (1. 21). Empty! Little did she appreciate what Ruth would mean to her. Turn to the closing scene, where we see Grandma Naomi with her little grandson in her bosom. "And the women said unto Naomi, Blessed be Jehovah, who hath not left thee this day without a near kinsman; and let his name be famous in Israel! And he shall be unto thee a restorer of life, and a nourisher of thine old age; for thy daughter-in-law, who loveth thee, who is better to thee than seven sons, hath borne him" (4. 14, 15). What a testimony from the women neighbors to Ruth's love and faithfulness!

If there were more Naomis in our land, there might be more Ruths.

Family love is the greatest redeeming factor in the world, next to love of God.

SELECTED THOUGHTS FOR THE QUIET HOUR.

(*Learn a Text a Day.*)

APRIL, 1923.

EASTER SUNDAY, 1st. *Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. John 16. 33.*

Christianity is a religion of hope and triumph. Its keynote is victory,—victory through Christ, who not only loved us and died for us, but who rose from the dead that he might be forever our living Saviour and abiding Lord. The religion of Jesus Christ is the only religion with a Calvary and an Easter Day. Calvary assures us of the love of God, and Easter, of the power of God.

"Lift up your heads, ye sorrowing ones,
And be ye glad of heart,
For Calvary and Easter Day,
Earth's saddest day and gladdest day,
Were just one day apart!"
—John McDowell.

MONDAY, 2nd. *And now, Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in thee. Psalm 39. 7.*

O God, who hast folded back the mantle of the night to clothe us in the golden glory of the day, chase from our hearts all gloomy thoughts, and make us glad with the brightness of hope, that we may effectively aspire to unwon virtues, through Jesus Christ our Lord! Amen.—An Ancient Collect.

TUESDAY, 3rd. *The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him. Ezra 8. 22.*

Child of God, never lay the blame of thy failure on God; seek for it within!—F. B. Meyer.

WEDNESDAY, 4th. *Be ye also patient! Stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh! James 5. 8.*

We are tempted sometimes to think that the Lord delayeth his coming, and to wonder if perchance we have been building our hopes upon some cunningly devised fable. Let us gird ourselves with patience, and lift up our heads to greet the joy that is surely coming in the morning!—J. Stuart Holden.

THURSDAY, 5th. *Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. Acts 9. 36.*

Faith—link it always with a loving act, and it will never degenerate into hard bigotry.—Caroline Fox.

FRIDAY, 6th. *With great mercies will I gather thee. Isaiah 54. 7.*

We can never bring before him a life too tangled and stained and wounded for him to set right and purify and repair, for his skill, his wisdom, his power, are equal to his compassion, which, in turn, is as deep as the needs of men, as high as their highest desires, as broad as the human family. We can never fail to interest him in our case, for there is nothing that concerns man which is not his concern.—Bishop Brent.

SATURDAY, 7th. *At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I . . . . will pray the Father for you. John 16. 26.*

I don't believe that there is such a thing in the history of God's kingdom as a right prayer offered in the right spirit that is for ever left unanswered.—Theodore L. Cuyler.

SUNDAY, 8th. *Be still, and know that I am God! Psalm 46. 10.*

One of the most pathetic things in connection with our ordinary public worship is the way in which we folk who have spent an hour together in the presence of God and in the study of the Word, or in prayer and in listening to the preacher, will, within two seconds of the benediction, be talking about the weather or about bonnets, or about crops. We do not give ourselves a chance. How can we be other than imperfect people? How can we be mighty in doing the works of God? How can we hope to have self-control? How can we live as we ought to live?—John Gardner.

MONDAY, 9th. *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Romans 8. 28.*

Let one more attest:
I have lived, seen God's hand thro' a lifetime,
And all was for best.
—Robert Browning.

TUESDAY, 10th. *He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities. Isaiah 53. 5.*

It was not in the days of peace and prosperity, but when the dreams of the people had proven untrue and hearts were breaking that Isaiah caught that matchless vision of him who was wounded for our transgressions, upon whom was the chastisement of our peace, and with whose stripes we are healed.—Fletcher Brockman.

WEDNESDAY, 11th. *Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Matthew 28. 20.*

"I am with you," and the words spoken to the eleven upon that mountain-side are the words spoken to you.—G. Campbell Morgan.

THURSDAY, 12th. *Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest! Matthew 11. 28.*

Did you never notice how Christ went among his own people, peering into every man's face, looking for the kindling light of understanding: calling, calling to the people, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, all ye that are bruised in spirit and broken in heart: come unto me, and I will give you rest"?—Harris E. Kirk.

FRIDAY, 13th. *The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Hebrews 4. 12.*

The Bible has a wonderful way of making people honest. You cannot go on reading it and not be honest.—Henry Montgomery.

SATURDAY, 14th. *The Father . . . . loveth you. John 16. 27.*

Say it to yourself in the morning; repeat it at noontime; let it be the sweet psalm of your evening hour! Worry will vanish, fear will retreat, and discouragement will cease to be, when you stand in the radiant certainty of your faith and say, God loves me! —Ozora S. Davis.

SUNDAY, 15th. *We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Chirst, praying always for you since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1. 3, 4.*

How does our faith look in the eye of heaven? That is the question. Our faith is not a painted something which we hand round to be judged by the color and by the perspective. Faith is a sacrifice, or it is nothing. When the church, as represented in Christian congregations, believes this we shall have what is called a revival. At present what is there to revive? Who would die for his faith?—Joseph Parker.

MONDAY, 16th. *For all things are your's, ... and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. 1 Corinthians 3. 21, 23.*

Many things in life are the precious rights of the child of God. Freedom from restlessness, deliverance from the bondage of care, exemption from worry, are divinely given rights of those who have given themselves in entire consecration to our Master and Lord.—Margaret E. Sangster.

TUESDAY, 17th. *Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. 2 Corinthians 4. 17.*

Cheer up, child of God; the time of your redemption draweth near! You may have to suffer a little while, but when you think of the eternal weight of glory, you can afford to suffer.—D. L. Moody.

WEDNESDAY, 18th. *Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. . . . . When the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore. John 21. 3, 4.*

Our Master loves the road on which there are no flags, no bunting, no decorations, no bands of music, those gray and familiar roads on which honest and loyal-hearted men and women travel every day.—J. H. Jowett.

THURSDAY, 19th. *Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life. Proverbs 4. 23.*

What boots it at one gate to make defence,
And at another to let in the foe?
—John Milton.

FRIDAY, 20th. *And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered, ... and went out, and wept bitterly. Luke 22. 61, 62.*

Coarse treatment never wins souls. God did not drive the chariot of his omnipotence up to Peter and command him to repent. God did not even speak to him. That one look of our Lord laid a spell upon his soul which was more than voice or language through all his after life.—Henry Drummond.

SATURDAY, 21st. *And the lord said unto the servants, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in. Luke 14. 23.*

Christ never told his disciples to stay at home and let the sinful and needy come to them.

SUNDAY, 22nd. *Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings. Malachi 4. 2.*

Malachi looked out on the sunset of the Old Testament. It was a dark outlook. There was little glory in the sunset clouds. His little prophecy reveals to us a condition of religious indifference and degeneracy not unlike the conditions we may expect in the closing days of the New Testament. But as he gazes upon the darkening picture, lo, in the east there begins to glow the dawn of a brighter sunrise, and he portrays the beautiful picture of our text, "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings"!—A. B. Simpson.

MONDAY, 23rd. *Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Ephesians 6. 11.*

It is only as we have rest in Christ, only

as we have peace through faith in his atoning blood, only as we have the purged conscience with the heart's affections set upon Christ, that we have any strength to war against our spiritual enemies.—Robert C. Chapman.

TUESDAY, 24th. *Peter, ... lovest thou me? John 21. 15.*

Peter, do you love me? Then you may live for me.

Peter, do you love me? Then I will plan the life which I wish you to lead for me.

Peter, do you love me? Then you may die for me.

I cannot think of anything more to be desired. I would rather Christ would say these words to me and fit me for the performance of these duties than to promise me the highest honors of heaven.—Henry G. Weston.

WEDNESDAY, 25th. *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ. Galatians 2. 16.*

"Justified" is almost, if not quite, the greatest word I know. It means to be acquitted at the bar of a righteous judge. It certainly means to have an open way into the Father's presence, and that the justified one has a standing before God which neither heaven nor hell may have a right to challenge.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

THURSDAY, 26th. *The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers. 1 Peter 3. 12.*

"Whatever may be the attitude of the body, the soul should ever be on its knees." We may turn every circumstance, experience and incident of the day into prayer, and find in the daily round, the common task, constant opportunities of ascending to God in prayer and praise.—W. H. Griffith Thomas.

FRIDAY, 27th. *Thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried. . . . . But thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place! Psalm 66. 10, 12.*

Now, my brethren, this thought should surely search us. Your life and mine will have to be tested in the light of God's presence, and the fire of God's holiness will play upon our life work. Do we remember this, and live as we would have liked to have lived when we stand in the presence of God?—G. H. C. Macgregor.

SATURDAY, 28th. *Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name! Psalm 138. 2.*

Scripture is the Holy Spirit's highest work. It is the living portrait of the living God, delineating every expression of his power and love toward man. Some day the heavens and the earth shall burn up and pass away, but his word shall abide for ever.—Mrs. George C. Needham.

SUNDAY, 29th. *The Lord is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous. Proverbs 15. 29.*

Has God ever been known to hear a prayer from a heart in which any form of iniquity was fostered or tolerated?—John R. Mott.

MONDAY, 30th. *By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. Hebrews 11. 5.*

My soul, would it be a boon to thee to be translated this day? Bethink thee well ere thou shalt answer! Art thou in sympathy now with the joys of heaven? If not, how shalt thou get that sympathy by a mere change of locality? O my soul, thou hast need of something before thy translation to make thy translation a joy to thee: the Presence beyond death must meet thee on this side of death!—George Mattheson.

ILLUSTRATIVE HINTS AND HELPS

ON THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR TOPICS.

Mrs. Ida Q. Moulton.

Lessons from the Psalms:
The Easter Psalm.

Psalm 16; Acts 2. 22-27. April 1.

Once again Easter's door of hope is opened to let the light of heaven shine upon life's shadows! Our hearts burn within us as we read the psalmist's words upon resurrection and the life everlasting in this Easter psalm.

David assures us that he had everything he needed for the present and future; and who of us hasn't, if he can say, "In thee do I put my trust"?

* * * * *

He tells us there are pleasures for evermore at God's right hand. It is said that most of Doré's paintings, brilliant at first, have faded because he used poor colors. Therefore let us select in this life pleasures with fast colors, having God himself back of them.

He also would have us remember that the path of life begins in this world. The Lord must always be "set before" us when we choose the path that winds in and out through eternity's world.

He not only says there are pleasures at God's right hand, but intimates that we can walk even in this life hand in hand with our blessed Lord. He is at my right hand.

Down "the long, long trail" we go hand in hand,
My Lord and I, to the Sunset Land;
Though the shadows deepen along the road,
It leads at last to the city of God.

There's nothing so sweet as to walk with the Lord,
For we talk as we walk, and in perfect accord;
Before we know it we find we have come
To the end of the road,—to our heavenly home!
—Rev. H. W. Pope.

* * * * *

One of the greatest questions that centers around Easter is, Why didn't God tell us more about the place to which Christ went? This story will suggest why.

When little Prince Roland, sitting upon the knees of King Charlemagne, besought the great ruler to tell him what treasures were to be his when he should be king, the wise king shook his head and grew thoughtful. How could a little child receive from a great ruler the full story of castles and palaces and kingly realms that were to be his when childhood had passed away? The very silence of Charlemagne foretold a wealth that was past description.

So the silence of God about the hereafter is evidence that his children in this life would not be able to receive the full story.

What Are Wise and Unwise Uses of the Lord's Day?

Isaiah 58. 8-14; Psalm 118. 24. April 8.

L—aw establishes Sunday as a civic holiday. It remains with Christians to make it a holy day.
O—n most days men are "hands." On the Lord's Day they are immortal souls.
R—emember this, that those who remain away from church because Sunday is the only day they have for recreation would have no day at all for recreation if it were not for those who go to church.
D—eeds of mercy are the Lord's Day joybells, calling us to do his pleasure throughout the week.
S—ome people claim to find God's temple in the fields and woods and running brooks. Did you ever notice the paraphernalia they take with them with which to worship in this temple?
D—on't mind if your preacher is not gifted! You can bring a large torch to a very small taper, and carry away a great blaze.
A—mericanitis, the nervous rush of the American, is a disease which will break us down unless counteracted by the sabbath.
Y—our sabbaths should be like a stile between fields of toil, where you can kneel and pray, or sit and meditate.

* * * * *

Oliver Wendell Holmes thus gives his reason for church attendance:

"I have a little flower in my breast called conscience, which needs watering once a week."

And because such a flower blooms in the breast of every man we are sometimes puzzled about the right and wrong use of Sunday. And this is where the dear old Book comes in, for wrapped up in the tenth verse of the first chapter of Revelation there is a solution: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day." Such an attitude would satisfy the most tender conscience as to the best use of the Lord's Day.

* * * * *

There were two neighborhoods in New Hampshire, one composed of six families, the other of five. The six-family neighborhood observed no sabbath and lived for self and a good time. The five-family neighborhood kept the Sabbath and lived for God, and this is the history that each neighborhood made:

Five of the six no-sabbath families were broken up, eight or nine of the parents became drunkards, one committed suicide, all came to penury. Several members have been in the State prison. One member fell in a duel. Some are in an almshouse.

The members of the sabbath-keeping families prospered. Most of the children are members of churches. One boy is a minister, another a missionary. None of them ever knew poverty, or were in disgrace, or brought sorrow to their families. It was said of one family, because of their upright lives, that they kept a holy Sunday all the week, and never scratched the Decalogue.

How Can We Become Truly Educated?

Proverbs 4. 1-9. April 15.

"There's a mighty difference," Lincoln once said, "between studying with the outside of your eyeballs and studying with your eyes open clear to the bottom of your brain."

What is defeat? asks one. It ought to be an education, the first step to something better. What is failure? It ought to be a spur to the man who receives it aright, to make the spirit within him go once more into the fight.

* * * * *

Alice Freeman Palmer was once asked to speak to a group of mill girls whose ages varied from 16 to 25. This is what she said:

"Some of you are feeling badly because you have missed your chance of an education. Let me tell you that the biggest part of education comes to us outside of the classroom. Life is our teacher. Begin now! Commit something to memory every day, something good. It need not be much,—three or four words will do,—just a little bit of a poem, or a Bible verse."

Then fearing some of the girls did not catch her meaning she said:

"Did you all understand what I mean?"

Quickly sprang up the youngest in the group. "I know! You want us to learn something we'd be glad to remember if we went blind."

"That's it exactly," said Mrs Palmer. "Such wisdom will be to you an ornament of grace and a crown of glory."

* * * * *

One just entering college said: "If I could only make up my mind just what I wanted my lifework to be, I could shape my course to prepare for it."

That is the reason why so many square pegs have tried to fit themselves into round holes after leaving college. They neglected to shape their studies for some definite work in the world.

Henry Ward Beecher said that education is the knowledge of how to use one's self. Everyone inside or outside college could learn that, even if they didn't know what just their lifework would be, or perchance were thwarted in carrying out their plans for that work after it was chosen.

* * * * *

To become educated we must learn to think.

Edison says the affairs of the world are controlled by a few men who think. In politics this would seem to be true, for according to the latest statistics regarding college men, who trained themselves to think, though less than one per cent of the population are college graduates, yet this one per cent has furnished:

55 per cent of our presidents;
36 per cent of the members of Congress;
47 per cent of the speakers of the House;
54 per cent of the vice-presidents;
62 per cent of the secretaries of state;
50 per cent of the secretaries of the treasury;
67 per cent of the attorneys-general;
69 per cent of the justices of the supreme court.

Train for Leadership!

Exodus 3. 7-12; 4. 10-12. April 22.

A leader who has been taught to obey stands ten times as much chance to succeed as one who has not, for successful leaders come from the ranks of obedient followers. Therefore train yourself to obey!

We are told the world is hungering for great leaders. It is also hungering for great followers.

A railroad man was holding a switch with both hands for the approaching train when he saw his little five-year old son on the track. "Lie down!" shouted the father. Instantly the lad dropped, the train passed over him, and he was left unhurt.

That is the kind of obedience we should train ourselves in if we aspire to lead.

* * * * *

A leader must be an initiator. His should be the first step, his the first move, his the mind that thinks things through, his the initiative that leads into the new way.

Too many follow in the old ruts. A tourist said that in China he saw a bridge with steep approaches that had once spanned a canal, but the canal had been filled in. Yet every day hundreds of Chinese toiled up one side of the bridge and down the other when they might have walked beside it.

* * * * *

Steadfastness is a virtue no leader should be without.

William of Orange said that he learned a word while crossing the English Channel which he could never forget. There was a great storm, and all night the captain was crying out to the men at the helm, "Steady! Steady! Steady!"

* * * * *

The value of system in leadership cannot be overestimated. General Dawes cut down the budget of the United States by one hundred and thirty-six millions. He did a complicated piece of work on a simple principle,—common sense and system. He forgot all about habitual routine, red tape, and former ways of doing things in Washington, in favor of an approved system of his own.

* * * * *

Courtesy also should be a grace of a leader. "Would Washington have been acknowledged 'first in the hearts of his countrymen' if he had been uniformly disagreeable and discourteous? Would Franklin have been chosen as ambassador to the court of France had he imitated the bears and savages of his native land? Would Abraham Lincoln have risen to the height he occupied, and won such hold on the hearts of the American people, had he been less tender-hearted and kind, less careful and considerate of the feeling of others?"

I will go forth 'mong men, not mailed in scorn,
But in the armor of a pure intent.
Great duties are before me, and great songs,
And whether crowned or crownless when I fall,
It matters not, so as God's work is done.

What My Denomination Has Meant to the World.

1 Peter 2. 9-12. April 29.

Tourists tell us that one can buy a complete set of all the Alpine flowers in an obscure inn at the foot of one of the mountains, all neatly pressed and in cases. Those who collect the flowers are careful to see that the commonest ones are there, and that none of the rarer specimens are missing.

And so our dear Father will make a per-

fect collection in the great day coming of all the denominational flowers that are blossoming in his kingdom.

* * * * *

Denominations are great shafts bringing to our little local machine the power of a mighty cataract.

A denomination is an instrument in an orchestra, each particular one contributing something godlike, no one carrying all his attributes.

Denominations are like leaves in a book, each leaf carrying its own message, yet all bound into a volume contributing to the gospel Jesus gave to the world.

"One's denomination is merely the particular knothole through which one is accustomed to look at God. If in removing to a new community your particular knothole cannot be found, why not peep through another? We should be looking for God, not for the knothole."

* * * * *

"I was interested to find," wrote Theodore Roosevelt, "that in Uganda, which contained some half a million Christians, in their fight against heathenism and Islam the native Christians belonging to the several different sects, both Catholics and Protestants, had taken as their symbol 'the Book,' sinking all minor differences among themselves, and coming together on the common ground of their common belief in 'the Book.'"

Thank God for this dear old Book of union, which binds the denominations together, and will eventually bind the world together!

* * * * *

We read that at a large party in a London drawing room a skeptic scornfully said to one of the guests, who was a Christian gentleman:

"I've been wondering how you Christians can expect us rational men to accept your doctrines when you are so ridiculously unable to agree among yourselves. I see here tonight English churchmen, high, broad, and low, a Roman Catholic, a member of the Greek church, a Presbyterian, a Wesleyan, a Baptist, a Congregationalist, an Irvingite, and a Quaker. Where and what is truth?"

This gentleman got permission of his host to address the company, and this is what he said:

"I appeal to you in the cause of our common Christianity, and I solemnly call upon those who believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Son of Mary, that he came into the world, was made flesh, and was crucified to save sinners, that he rose again from the dead, ascended into heaven, ever liveth to make intercession for us, and will come again at the end of the world to judge the quick and the dead, to kneel and repeat with me the prayer he taught us."

All knelt but one.

BIBLE NOTES FOR DAILY DEVOTIONS.

LEAVES FROM AN INTERPRETER'S NOTEBOOK.

Rev. John Gardner, D. D.

APRIL, 1923.

Sunday, 1st. 1 Kings 12. 1-20.

Rehoboam is aware of the need of circumspection if he wishes to inherit the kingdom. Solomon secured the succession because he had an organized party working under his mother's direction who seized the throne while David was still alive, and then proceeded with such policies as kept the tribes from revolting. But as the years passed the murmuring of the people increased, and now it was by no means certain that his son would be elected to the kingship. Certainly he must not ignore the northern tribes. He therefore went to Shechem. The tenseness of the situation is shown in the action of the leaders in sending to Egypt to recall Jeroboam to champion their rights. They then negotiated with the king for the redress of grievances, and particularly for a reduction of taxation and relief from the system of levy.

The prince consulted his advisers who had attained to high position, and who had wide and long experience. They gave him good counsel. Kindness will accomplish more than force. Power should be used in human service. A wise king will not exploit his people, but serve them with counsel and with protection from outer and inner foes.

Rehoboam had not been reared in an atmosphere of service. His father had exploited the people rather than helped them. Turning from the counsels of wisdom the prince consulted the lawless hot-heads with

whom he had followed his pleasures. These advisers are called "boys," to show that they were utterly irresponsible and reckless. So without regard to his resources, acting like a man possessed, he flouted the wisdom of statesmen and poured contempt on those whose suffrages he so sought. The immediate effect was the selection by the overwhelming majority of Jeroboam to be king over Israel. Rehoboam went back to Jerusalem, and was elected king over the tribe of Judah. In a moment of rashness he had disrupted the kingdom built by David and Solomon.

Was the disruption good or bad? We can only generalize on a matter like this. How can two walk together unless they are agreed? Israel and Judah always had been jealous of each other. Farrar says of the ultimate result, "It fostered a religious power and concentration which were of more value to the world than any other blessings." Stade says, "The people of Israel goes under, but the religion of Israel triumphs over the powers of the world, while it changes its character from the religion of a people into a religion of the world."

O God, we thank thee for thy unfolding message in the history of the people whom thou didst elect as thy messengers to mankind! We adore thee because of him in and through whom thou didst declare thy final and perfect word. We would believe the gospel and live in its saving energy. Amen.

Monday, 2nd. 1 Kings 12. 21-33.

It is interesting to notice the prophetic figures that haunt the annals of Jewish kings. They are seldom more than names, sometimes they are not even named. Their presence suggests the influence of high moral and spiritual purpose over the passions as over the policies of men.

Rehoboam was a hot-headed youth, eager to carry out his foolish threat to whip free-born men to their knees, when Shemaiah appeared with his "Thus saith the Lord." Rehoboam becomes aware that there is someone in the way whose sword is keen, whose power is omnipotent; and before that presence he himself is made to bend the knee.

Our attention is now diverted to the acts of Jeroboam. He was a man of power; he was the chosen of the Lord for the position of ruler over Israel. What would he do? First he shows wisdom in selecting Shechem. Foakes-Jackson says, "Jerusalem is no longer the important center, and Ahijah, the prophet of the ancient sanctuary of Shiloh, is the religious leader. Shechem was connected with the names of Abraham, Jacob, Joshua, Gideon, whose son Abimelech was the first Israelite to assume the title of king. It was the site of Abraham's first altar, and of the joint worship of Baal-berith (Lord of the Covenant) by Israelites and Canaanites. Joseph was buried here, and it was one of the cities of refuge. It continued to be regarded as a holy place for many years, and on the neighboring Mount Gerizim the Samaritans built their temple." Shechem was well chosen and more likely to capture the imagination of the Israelites of that day than Jerusalem itself.

Jeroboam now makes a fatal blunder. He was afraid of the healing influences of a common worship, and determined to establish a distinctive worship in historic centers. He created certain forms or images to express Jehovah. Skinner thinks he got the idea from the Canaanites, whose Baal is associated with the figure of the ox. "In the Babylonian religion the ox was the sacred animal of the Syrian and Babylonian thunder-god Ramman." It may be that these religious practices were already in vogue, and Jeroboam simply gave them the sanction of law. He was right in associating himself with the religious life of his people; he was wrong in accommodating the worship of Jehovah to the preferences of the people. Religion should never be brought down to the level of our vagrant fancies, but should always remain a challenge to our souls to walk on the uplands of faith, reverence and obedience.

Almighty God, teach us self-discipline! May we learn to reverence thy holy name! Help us to worship thee in spirit and in truth! Amen.

Tuesday, 3rd. 1 Kings 13.

The story of the visit of the unnamed prophet from Judah has always puzzled commentators. They have stumbled over the mention of Josiah so long before he was born. They have been puzzled to explain wherein the sin of Jeroboam consisted. It was apparently connected with the calves. It could not have been connected with places of worship at Dan and Bethel, for such worship occurred hundreds of years before he was born. And the temple in Jerusalem which Solomon had built contained cherubim, lions and bulls. The curse pronounced by the man of God from Judah was not on the calves, but on the altar. The coming up of the lion to slay but not to devour is meant as a miracle. What is to be said about the narrative?

Apparently the provision of the symbols had led to a prostration before the symbols and a kissing of them as an act of worship. And it would seem that the sacrifices of the altar were being offered in connection with the recognition of such symbols as objects of worship. The prophet declares that this is the first step towards such a degradation as shall ultimately involve the offering of the fruit of the body for the sin of the soul.

The prophet is to deliver his message, but not to discuss it. The man of God be-

comes entangled when he tarries to criticize or to debate. It is very easy for a preacher to undo in ten minutes after church the work of God which was being wrought through his instrumentality during the time that he stood before the congregation as an ambassador. Preaching is not lecturing. A sermon is not a dissection, but a charge. He who preaches speaks for his king, and he presumes when he tries to discuss his Lord's message. A preacher is to be tested by the moral authority of the word which he lives to proclaim. A trustee of the gospel holds a sacred office, and must not betray his trust.

Our Father, we pray that thy Spirit may anoint our pastors, giving them vision, message, and power! Save them from the trivial! Help them to live with thee and for their people! In Christ's name. Amen.

Wednesday, 4th. 1 Kings 14. 1-20.

We know not at what period in Jeroboam's life this incident occurred. It shows the tragedy that invades palace as well as cottage, and is pathetic in its revelation of the impotence of those who lived in days when medicine and surgery were but little understood.

Jeroboam turns to the chief of the prophets, Ahijah, the man who announced to him that he was chosen of God to be ruler over Israel. The visit of the unnamed prophet had led Jeroboam to fear the school of the prophets, yet his heart cried out for the aid of the man of God who had visited him long years before. He therefore sent his queen to seek the prophet's help. Only he had her disguise herself. Foolish man! He who would know the will of God had better learn that the first requirement is sincerity and transparency. Never try to hide yourself from God! Your hiding reveals your sense of guilt. God challenges men individually, "Adam, where art thou?" Thus he calls each of us.

The aged and blind prophet is not to be deceived, and before he deals with a mother's grief he exposes a man's sin and its penalty. Jeroboam would have done well to have consulted the prophet earlier. The poor queen turned homeward with a bleeding heart. Nevermore should she fold her son to her bosom. The mourning of the entire nation shows how deeply the people were attached to their king and his household.

The precise failure of Jeroboam is difficult to fix. He seems to have trusted his own sagacity and the advice of political leaders rather than men of prophetic soul like Ahijah. Hence he did what was expedient without looking forward to the possible issue. As a matter of fact, the world is but little indebted to the northern kingdom for its spiritual heritage, but is tremendously indebted to the tiny kingdom of Judah for psalms and laws and prophecies that have elevated the entire scale of being.

O God, teach us our need of thee! Help us not to lean to our own understanding, but to seek the guidance of thy Spirit! May he lead us into all truth! Amen.

Thursday, 5th. 1 Kings 14. 21-31.

The reign of Rehoboam is without any of the redeeming features of his northern rival. Jeroboam was in many respects a great and enlightened man, and held the confidence of his people to the end. Rehoboam began and continued in folly. The separation of the tribes made Judah vulnerable, and hence the ambitious Shishak, king of Egypt, was able to overrun the country and extract great plunder. Rehoboam was confronted with the fact that his father had made Jerusalem the city of Jehovah by the consecration of a holy place, a temple, to his glory. The foolish man began to treat religion as a light thing. There was good in all religion, he held, and hence he permitted heathen worship, idolatrous, sensual, degrading worship. Evidently the Bible assigns much of the blame to the young man's parentage. His foolish father had brought women from everywhere to gratify his passions, and the woman who became Rehoboam's mother was Naamah the Ammonite. She was the chief lady of the court, and she set the fashion in religion. Many a mother spoils the life committed to her through her indifference to spiritual religion.

What are we to understand by the phrase "provoked him to jealousy"? Barnes says, "That God is a jealous God is an anthropopathetic way of stating a fundamental principle of the religion of the Old Testament, namely, that worship is to be paid to one God only. This principle was impressed upon Israel as a preparation for the reception of the truth that there is but one God." On this solid foundation men were prepared for the unfolding of the divine in Christ. In the face of Jesus of Nazareth men beheld the glory of One who is righteous, loving, and merciful, and to him little children, wayward men and women, humble saints, are turning in ever increasing multitudes.

O God, we pray that our lives may be full of purpose! Save us from slothful ease! Teach us to measure life by its achievements rather than its years! May we use the present moment to thy honor and glory! Amen.

Friday, 6th. 1 Kings 15. 1-8.

In this brief survey of the life of Abijam there are certain phrases which are full of suggestion. The name of his mother suggests that she was a granddaughter of Absalom, though Josephus says there was

a tradition that she was a granddaughter of Tamar. He was but a young man, and his reign was brief,—a little over two years. Emphasis is thrown on the fact that he took his father as his model, and copied the wickedness that made his name an offence. The young man was lacking in sincerity. If he patronized religion it was with an utter indifference to its spiritual quality.

What is meant by the expression, "God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem"? A lighted lamp is a "sign of prosperity and joy." It chases away shadows and gloom. How came it that Rehoboam and his sons should be thus favored? It was for David's sake, the grandfather who was so weak in some ways, but who was so true in other ways. There is no forgetting the crime of David's life when he treated a noble man with foul treachery. On the other hand, David did try to be good, and he did bear witness to Jehovah and aim at a nobler, purer worship.

We know not the influence of a good man. It spans the years. Long after his name is forgotten, men's lives will be ennobled because he bore faithful witness to truth, reverence, love. Let us aim at goodness for its own sake! It is better to be good than bad, better to ally ourselves on behalf of goodness than wickedness.

Our Father, help us to work thy works! Clothe us with thy Spirit! Teach us to be imitators of our Lord! May the mind that was in him control our dispositions! For his name's sake. Amen.

Saturday, 7th. 1 Kings 15. 9-24.

If the reigns of Rehoboam and Abijam have been disappointing, the long reign of Asa is one of the most interesting and influential of all the kings of Judah.

He was an inheritor of the finest things in the lives of his forebears. He comes to the throne in his youth, and immediately sets about correcting the wicked abuses which have offended Jehovah. First he sets about cleansing the palace. His mother had carried her religious perversities to inordinate lengths, and the young king resolved that he would be a king in deed as well as name. The queen mother must be deposed and banished from her position of influence. The erection of an unholy and indeed a degrading symbol was to Asa an intolerable offence. It requires high moral courage to break with your own parents, to put duty before family loyalty, to put the service of God before the service of parents. Yet he who would be perfect must have moral courage sufficient to break with father and mother when they try to persuade him to be less than the highest of which he is capable in the service of Jehovah.

In the next place Asa set about public reform. In connection with the Temple an order of dedicated men had sprung up who in the name of religion practised vice. These Asa swept away. These acts demanded high courage, but the king was equal to them. Had he been able to put his trust in the Lord rather than in big battalions, he might have led Judah to a glorious destiny. He made a false move when he placed himself beneath the protection of Benhadad, and sent the Temple treasures to buy the Syrian army for an invasion of Israel. It was a heavy price to pay, and according to Chronicles the prophets of the Lord rebuked the king for his wickedness. What right has brother to strike at brother? It was an evil thing to do.

The Scriptures show their strange moral quality in that they do not hide events of this kind. Can it be that in this we see a suggestion of the book of God in which our various acts are recorded, and there is no oblivion for our failures in brotherhood? Will the treacheries, the vindictive acts of religious people, be exposed in the day of the Lord? Must each man's work stand the test of fire?

Eternal God, give us a deeper reverence for thy laws! Teach us to live so that our good shall not be evil spoken of! Give us courage to defend thy name and to protect thy cause even in the face of those of our own family who despise thee! Make us loyal to Christ. Amen.

Sunday, 8th. 1 Kings 15. 25-34.

All was not well with the northern kingdom. Following the death of Jeroboam the kingdom was torn by revolution. Nadab the son of Jeroboam was assassinated by Baasha, and in accordance with Oriental practice every member of the royal family was put to death. Baasha belonged to the tribe of Issachar, that stayed at home in days of national crisis, the tribe that got rich while others fought Jehovah's battles, the tribe that knew what people ought to do, but could never be relied upon to do anything save that which would be for its own immediate benefit. Just how Baasha got his power we do not know. The tragedy of the whole business lies in the fact that brethren who should have been united in the face of a common danger, and who should have marched forward unitedly to the realization of the eternal purpose, were plotting and scheming against each other, and so exposing themselves to every enemy on their borders.

There is irony in these brief records of kings. Men were raised to a high position among the people of God. They were supposed to be champions, leaders and teachers of the children of the covenant. Yet man after man is dismissed with a phrase. Why mention them at all? If nothing good can be said about them, why not leave them in oblivion? I suppose one purpose may be to

provide a mirror in which we can see ourselves. How much more is worth recording concerning you and me? Our families may try to bury us with respect, but if the absolute truth were told concerning our unconscious influence, would it tell the story of one who made it easier for others to be good? Or would it say, "Here lie the remains of one who unconsciously stood for the things that are evil in the sight of the Lord"?

O God, teach us to live as those who must give account unto thee! Help us to walk in companionship with those who love thy church, and who believe in thy purpose for the race! Make us allies of the good! For Christ's sake. Amen.

Monday, 9th. 1 Kings 16. 1-20.

The story of Baasha is instructive. He was apparently a man of lowly birth who by sheer ability made his way to power. He died in peace, and yet he had not escaped the penalty of wickedness. The blow fell, although it seemed to have missed the culprit and to strike the innocent. It is an oft-repeated lesson of the book of Kings that wicked men may seem to get away with their policies, but they are really entailing disaster on their descendants. This is what happened to Jeroboam, and it happened to Baasha.

Another question is referred to in verse 7. If a man has so outraged deity that judgment is declared against him, is the man who executes the divine decree exonerated from responsibility for his crime? He is not to be excused. The Lord demands from each man loyalty to his holy law. He does not excuse any man. Yet he has so ordained life that the wages of sin is death, and the executioner is chosen from among those who are themselves reaping the wages.

Two years after the death of Baasha the acts which he wrought on the house of Jeroboam were repeated with equal swiftness on his own house, and by Zimri who had sprung from as lowly a lot as himself.

Parker says: "Zimri was a born traitor. Treachery was in his very blood. In the case of Elah, Zimri had a marked advantage, for Elah was a drunken fool. He was in the habit of visiting the house of another of his servants, a steward called Arza, and there he had what drink he asked for; and he asked for a great deal, so much so that he was often drunk in his servant's house, and on one of these occasions Zimri went in and killed him, and reigned in his stead. These are the facts which we have to deal with. Are they very ancient, or are they happening round about us every day? Is Elah dead? Is Zimri clean gone forever? And is the house of the servant Arza closed, so that the master can drink no more with the steward? Elah lives in every man who has great chances or opportunities in life, but allows them to slip away through one leak in character. Zimri still lives in all persons who take advantage of the weaknesses of others. And does not Arza still live in those who find the means whereby men may conceal their evil habits and indulge their unholy desires?"

O God, we do not understand thy wonderful compassion! We are so weak, so perverse, so vain, and we have so persistently spurned thee, yet thou art concerned for us. Help us to respect ourselves! Teach us to live in a manner worthy of thy regard! For Christ's sake. Amen.

Tuesday, 10th. 1 Kings 16. 21-34.

Omri found his authority disputed, but speedily put an end to the claims of his rival, and then developed his kingdom so mightily that one hundred years later the proud Assyrian spoke of Israel as the house of Omri. Seeing that Omri was so great a king, why are the references to him so slight? We know that there was a special record of his reign from which the author of Kings quotes. We know that he gained ascendency over Moab, for the Moabite Stone tells us about it. We know that he made an alliance with Phœnicia. We know that Assyria recognized his power. We know that he was defeated by Benhadad I, and lost a number of cities, and it was this defeat which led to the alliance with Phœnicia and to the ultimate overthrow of Syria. Why were these things not told? It is because there is little of religious importance to record about him. In this respect he is overshadowed by his successor Ahab, during whose reign great prophetic figures emerge, and Elijah inaugurates a new era in the history of the nation and of the world.

Foakes-Jackson says: "Omri is described as more wicked than any of his predecessors. The only thing recorded of him is that he built a city on a hill bought from a man named Shemer and called it after his name, Shameron, more familiar to us as Samaria." Skinner says: "His choice of Samaria as the capital, which is the one thing here related to his credit, was itself an evidence of political sagacity, comparable to David's selection of Jerusalem."

Omri's mistake seems to have lain in that for political reasons he permitted a marriage between his son and a Phœnician princess, an alliance which involved the same problem and hazard as the alliances of Solomon, with their tolerance of the pagan worships of the women who filled his courts. Ahab brought Jezebel into Israel, and with her the recognition or toleration of the god worshiped by the Phœnicians. It was a serious step, and well-nigh ruined Israel.

We are all in danger at the same point. When consenting to the marriages of our children, when thinking of our own mar-

riage, we are tempted to disparage religion. We ask questions as to social status, as to culture, as to wealth: we do not ask questions as to loyalty to God. A million broken hearthstones in America are eloquent testimony to our tragic folly!

Our Father, we thank thee for faithful souls of every clime who have chosen to cleave unto virtue and have esteemed a good name better than great riches! We thank thee that through thy blessing these men and women are strengtheners of all who seek to be kind, pure and true. Add to their number, we beseech thee! Amen.

Wednesday, 11th. 1 Kings 17. 1-7.

Skinner says: "Although these chapters cover only about three years of Elijah's life, they present an epitome of his whole career, and constitute the chief document for our interpretation of the religious crisis of the ninth century. The nature of that crisis must be briefly indicated. The worship of the Baals—the local deities of the old Canaanitish sanctuaries,—had been practised by the Israelites ever since the conquest, and had resulted in an amalgamation of the two types of religion and a confusion of the ethical character of Jehovah with the attributes proper to a mere nature-deity. The introduction of the cult of the Tyrian Baal under the patronage of Jezebel was recognized as a new departure in the life of the people, and it raised anew the whole issue between true and false religion in Israel. At this juncture Elijah appeared. He saw, if no one else did, that the conflict between Jehovah and Baal was no mere affair of politics or patriotism, but a conflict between two opposite religious principles, of which one could not exist alongside the other, on the one hand the moral nature-religion of Canaan, and on the other the ethical religion of Israel."

We must start our study of Elijah with this background in our minds. Elijah saw a clearly defined issue. These two ideas were incapable of reconciliation. They were mutually repellant. One or other must go, and Elijah became the fearless champion of an ethical faith.

Barnes says, "Elijah wished to convert Ahab. But for the influence of Jezebel he would have succeeded." Can we appreciate the significance of that sentence? A wife the enemy of her husband's soul! A wife dragging a man down from ethical loftiness to immoral sensuousness, and making a religion of it!

The very name of Elijah is eloquent, "Jehovah is my God." He spoke of himself as "Elijah," not as "Elijah the prophet." Office meant nothing to him, truth meant everything. In dramatic speech he pronounced the divine judgment, and then disappeared from sight.

Almighty God, help us to be true to our trust! May we guard that which thou hast committed to our keeping! May we dispense it to those whom thou hast instructed us to help! In the day of accounting grant that we may not be put to shame! Amen.

Thursday, 12th. 1 Kings 17. 8-24.

Alexander Whyte says: "Elijah was a great man. There was a great mass of manhood in Elijah. He was a Mount Sinai of a man, with a heart like a thunderstorm. That man among ourselves who has the most human nature in him, and the most heart; the most heart, and the most passion in his heart; the most love and the most hate; the most anger and the most meekness; the most scorn and the most sympathy; the most sunshine and the most melancholy; the most agony in prayer, and the most victorious assurances that all the time his prayer is already answered,—that man is the likest of us all to the prophet Elijah, that man has Elijah's own mantle fallen upon him. Only alas! there is no such man among us."

There is no more appalling picture of the frightful effects of famine than this at Zarephath. Elijah had uttered a terrible word when he spoke of three years of famine. They had come, and they had smitten Phœnicia as well as Israel,—Phœnicia, the land where Jezebel's gods were supposed to preside. What anguish of despair was knocking at the door of this widow's heart! A sick boy, an empty barrel, just one step between her and death. She was not an Israelite, but she was religious, and her religion controlled her even with death in sight. When the prophet asked for that which she and her child needed, she gave it to him. Her obedience saved her; her anguish was turned to astonished wonder as she beheld the ways of the Lord. She had still further cause for marvel when her son was restored.

Meyer says: "Many a man might bear himself as a hero and saint in the solitudes of Cherith, or on the heights of Carmel, and yet wretchedly fail in the home life of Zarephath. Elijah was the same man in the widow's house as on Carmel's heights. The woman became so ennobled and changed by her contact with that man of God that our Saviour awarded to her a prophet's reward. Her work was small, her conceptions obscure, her home Gentile and heathen; and yet because her motives were noble, and her spirit in sympathy with Elijah's, it was announced by him at whose bar we must all stand for our reward, that she had done what she could, and that her crown should shine as brightly as that placed on the brow of the prophet of God. We are rewarded, not according to our sphere, or the results of our work, but according to the sincerity and beauty of our motives; and these may be as lofty in an obscure widow as in Elijah himself."

O God, our Father, help us to trust thee

in the dark and cloudy day! However hard the pressure of circumstances, may we have grace to do the noble and generous thing! Help us to carry other loads than our own! Give us the Spirit of Jesus Christ! Amen.

Friday, 13th. 1 Kings 18. 1-19.

Matters were coming to a crisis in Israel. Apparently Jezebel felt that the attack of the prophets was directed against herself, and the coming of the drought according to the word of Elijah seemed to expose the feebleness of her Baals: and so in anger she had turned against the prophets. She seems to have massacred many of them, and would have carried the matter further had not the king's steward Obadiah come to the rescue. Some think that this must have been with the king's knowledge, and shows that he was not wholly ill-disposed to those who were faithful to the God of Israel. Foakes-Jackson says, "But he had no mercy for the leader of the whole movement, Elijah, who had prophesied the drought. He was sought for in every neighboring kingdom as the author of all the agitation, the troubler of Israel. In the meantime Jezebel had organized the worship of the Baal, and supported at her own cost 450 prophets. Public opinion was evidently setting against her policy, owing to the long drought, which was regarded as a divine punishment for the neglect of Jehovah. It was at this juncture that Elijah revealed himself."

Man is immortal till his work is done. Elijah had undertaken a great crusade, and now that the hour had come he took the issue into his own hands, and sent his challenge to Ahab in the name of an authority which no king dare resist. Obadiah was the king's steward, but he was first the Lord's servant. In a critical and dangerous hour he had done what he could, and now he recognizes the authority behind the prophet's word.

Elijah is master of the situation. He appointed the place, the time and the method of deciding once for all the great question as to whether or not his people are the people of Jehovah. When at last the king and the prophet meet there is no quailing on the part of the prophet. He is a God-clothed man, and the authority of the Almighty is speaking through him.

What is this moral quality which causes wicked men to hesitate when confronted by a man of God? Our Master walked through angry crowds who were ready to stone him. Wickedness seems to reduce its victims to the level of beasts, while virtue clothes men with authority which gives them dominion over beasts. Elijah challenged the king and the king obeyed as though he were a subject.

O God, fill us with moral courage! Help us to stand in the evil day, and having done all to stand! Clothe us with divine armor! Remove out of our souls all fear of man! Help us to be strong and of good courage, to fear not nor be dismayed! Amen.

Saturday, 14th. 1 Kings 18. 20-46.

The challenge of the prophet has rung through the ages, "How long halt ye between two opinions?" Or, as it may be rendered, "How long go ye halting, being of a double mind?" Or, "How long go ye limping between the two sides?" There is no reconciling opinions so diametrically opposite: to try to uphold both is to limp, to be uncertain in one's walk.

The challenge was met by dead silence. The failure of Israel was not a new or recent thing. The attempt to reconcile irreconcilables had gone on for centuries. Jezebel had brought it to a climax. When Elijah says that he is the only loyal one left we must remember, as Barnes says, that "the words are only true in the sense that Elijah was the only prophet who dared to stand up in the cause of Jehovah and challenge the worshipers of Baal. Obadiah had preserved a hundred prophets of Jehovah." It was true that in the hour of national decision Elijah stood alone against the 450 prophets of Baal.

Elijah was probably the first of the prophets to realize that Jehovah alone is God over all the earth. Moses had discovered and taught that he was the only God in Israel, and that the children of the covenant must not divide allegiance between Jehovah and another. Elijah goes further. Neither in Israel nor in Phœnicia nor anywhere else is there a God who demonstrates his reality by his activity. From this time Israel and the world must realize that Jehovah has a glory that he will neither give nor share with another.

Now that Jehovah has been vindicated in the test by fire, and while the people go to their tents and the king turns back to refresh himself and to brood over that which has happened, Elijah went to the top of the mountain and pleaded with Jehovah to give the token of his mercy and forbearance in the sending of rain. After a period the answer came.

Cheyne says: "May we really venture to look out for answer to prayer? Did not Elijah live in the heroic ages of faith? No; God still works miracles. Take an instance from the early history of Christian Europe. You know the terror excited by the Huns, who in the sixth century after Christ penetrated into the very heart of Christian France. Already they had occupied the suburbs of Orleans, and the people who were incapable of bearing arms lay prostrate in prayer. The governor sent a messenger to observe from the ramparts. Twice he looked in vain, but the third time he reported a small cloud on the horizon. 'It is the aid of God', cried the bishop of Orleans. It

was the dust raised by advancing squadrons of Christian troops."

O God, we thank thee that in all ages thou hast shown thyself strong on behalf of those who trust thee! Out of the sorrow and anguish of our generation thou hast brought peace, liberty, and hope for the generations to come. Help us to believe that thou art still working on behalf of those who fear thy name! Amen.

Sunday, 15th. 1 Kings 19. 1-9.

Skinner says: "Although many features of the narrative are obscure, its main conceptions convey an irresistible impression of truth. The psychological reaction following on the disappointment of his grand ambition, his temporary loss of faith in his own mission, his craving for some nearer contact with the historic God of Israel, his sudden perception of how little a man can accomplish, and his consequent weariness of life: all these things are portrayed with marvelous insight and delicacy, and invest the character of Elijah with a singular naturalness and charm."

The situation revealed in the second verse is dramatic. Jezebel is a baffled woman. Her gods have been disgraced. Her prophets have been put to the sword. Her husband has been impressed with the majesty of Jehovah. The people are veering to the side of the prophet. What shall she do? She dare not strike at Elijah: she can only threaten him. The Septuagint reads, "If thou art Elijah, I am Jezebel!" It would be a woman against a man. On the other hand, Elijah had expected a greater triumph than had come to him. He was overwrought, and he began to suffer the reaction which was inevitable to one who had been through such an emotional strain. Terror seized him. In the hour when he should have pressed home his victory he fled away. Had he stood his ground he might have headed a great reformation, but he seems to have lacked the necessary statesmanship. Meyer says, "Surely Elijah will preserve a dignified silence, or return an answer like that which Chrysostom sent on a similar occasion to the Empress Eudoxia, 'Go tell her I fear nothing but sin.' But instead of this we are told (and surely the sacred historian must have heaved a deep sigh as he wrote the words), 'When he saw that, he arose, and went for his life.'"

An indication of the condition of Elijah's mind is seen in the fact that he first fled to Judea and sought refuge among the people from whom his own people had seceded, and later went to Horeb. His complaint to the angel shows how deep was his depression.

Our Father, help us to stand in the evil day! When our strength begins to fail, when we turn back in the day of triumph, come to our rescue, we beseech thee! Give us strong faith in thy presence and in thy willingness and ability to vindicate thyself in and through us! Amen.

Monday, 16th. 1 Kings 19. 10-21.

Elijah is in the mountain of vision, the place where Moses had met with God. He was a poor despairing soul as he climbed the hill and sought refuge in one of the fastnesses of the rocky slopes. He began to be aware of God's presence. A voice within his soul challenged him to self-defence. He began very lamely, as though he had been more jealous for Jehovah than Jehovah was himself. He asserted himself as though there were not 8000 brave souls maintaining a faithful witness all through the distressful period of religious declension. Whilst his soul was engaged in self-defence a strange and ominous stillness was gathering about the mountain, and the prophet came to the mouth of the cave.

Beaver says, "The tempest, earthquake and fire were the heralds of Jehovah, the awe-inspiring, terrible God. The deep calm that ensued was not symbolic of the gentleness of God, for he spoke to Elijah not kindly, gentle, gracious words of love, but words of fearful import that were far more like the tempest, earthquake and fire than like the gentle stillness. He will punish his apostate people unsparingly through Hazael, Jehu, and Elisha, until only a faithful remnant is left. The loyalty of his people is more important to him than its power and prosperity. Moreover, to this prophet's thought Jehovah's dominion is not confined to Israel. Thus Elijah broke down part of the national limitations of Jehovah. He sees the God of Israel using as his instrument Syria, where his agent is enthroned. To Elijah, Jehovah directs the movements of history, and not only those of Israel. But God's purpose has not yet been achieved, Elijah has not yet won a decisive victory for him, nor will this prophet be the instrument of victory, after all. Nevertheless in the end the divine purpose will be accomplished, and Elijah is to summon the human agents to complete the work."

This is a weighty paragraph. Let us lay hold on its three great lessons: loyalty is more important than power and prosperity; Jehovah is bigger than Israel; a prophet may fail of attainment through yielding to human impulses. He must stand in the Lord's day and resolutely determine that Jehovah's glory is more important than his own safety. A lesser man than Elijah might accomplish more if he would cease from exaggerating his own importance and find his distinction in his work.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, we pray that we may learn to be loyal and obedient! Teach us to be faithful! Help us to build our lives on thy omnipotence! For Christ's sake. Amen.

Tuesday, 17th. 1 Kings 20. 1-21.

We are now permitted to see Ahab in a different aspect. He is a brave and fearless leader, he is generous in the hour of victory.

The chapter opens with the Syrian confederacy besieging Samaria. Ahab admits that Benhadad is his suzerain, and he is willing to pay heavily for the privilege of living in peace. Benhadad does not intend to accept such a situation. Ahab must submit himself and his people unconditionally. Ahab called his council together, told them what terms he had been willing to accept, and what had been Benhadad's rejoinder. The council advised rejection of the terms. Ahab therefore reiterated his willingness to pay heavily, but his unwillingness to surrender his kingdom. The reply from Benhadad showed that he meant to utterly destroy Samaria. Ahab replies in a manly way with words that are immortal, "Let not him that girdeth on his armor boast himself as he that putteth it off." The battle is not yet won, and he is foolish who under-estimates his foes.

The foolish Syrians were so proud, and boastful, that they gave themselves up to a night's carousal prior to undertaking what they conceived to be an easy task. While the Syrians drank, Ahab was listening to the voice of a prophet. The man is unnamed, but what does it matter? The highest privilege is to be a voice proclaiming the word of the Lord. Ahab hears that Jehovah has this matter in hand, and like a soldier stands at attention. If the Lord will work, he will need an instrument: whom will he choose? The answer comes, the young picked men of the provinces, and Ahab is to be the leader and the first to strike a blow.

It was a great battle. On the one hand the drink-soaked Syrian hosts, on the other hand the little company of picked young men who came in the name of Jehovah, followed by a small army. The Syrians fled in confusion, and Israel was saved.

O Lord, grant unto our young men such spiritual fitness that in the day of thy appointment they may be ready to meet thy enemies and to overthrow them! Let the word of the Lord come to this generation, we beseech thee! Amen.

Wednesday, 18th. 1 Kings 20. 22-43.

Ahab must not delude himself into fancying that the Syrians will accept defeat. The prophet warns him to prepare for a renewal of the attack a year hence. Forewarned is forearmed.

On their return to Damascus the counselors of Benhadad came forward with their explanations of defeat. It never occurred to them that drunkenness is a nation's deadliest foe. They think seriously about God as a possible explanation, but their ideas of his sovereignty are too small. They think that he is god of the hills, but not of the plains. When ready they will choose their own battlefield, and then it will be a war between men, in which Jehovah can be left out of their reckoning! Poor Syrian statesmen! How is it that almost every requisite is sought in a statesman excepting a knowledge of God and his ways?

The battle is fought on ground of their own choosing. Aphek was in the plain of Sharon. Once more Ahab is victor; and this time the victory is even greater than before. The Syrians were put to utter confusion, and soon the proud Benhadad came as a kneeling suppliant, asking mercy from him whom he had despised. The manner in which the appeal was met, the generosity of Ahab's response, reveal to us a side of that king's character which marks him out as one of the greatest kings Israel ever knew. His failure is the more to be regretted. It shows that however brave and generous a man may be he needs to guard himself from compromise in matters of the soul's allegiance to God!

It is difficult to explain the paragraph which follows. Evidently there was an intense nationalism at work among the prophets, which led to such a fierce and terrible indictment of the merciful action of Ahab. Skinner says, "A member of one of these fraternities gives expression to this feeling by an acted parable, in which he plays the part of a man wounded in the recent fight who had incurred the forfeit of his life by letting slip a prisoner who had been committed to his charge. Having put this case before the king, and been refused redress, he suddenly throws off his disguise, and like Nathan on a well-known occasion, shows the astonished Ahab that he has unwittingly passed sentence upon himself. For setting free an enemy who had fallen under Jehovah's ban he and his people would have to bear the penalty that ought to have been exacted of the conquered Syrian."

O God, teach us how to behave in days of triumph as well as in hours of humiliation and defeat! May we seek to do those things that shall redound to thy glory! May we make no compromise with iniquity! For Christ's sake. Amen.

Thursday, 19th. 1 Kings 21. 1-16.

It seems incredible that this can be the Ahab of whom we have been reading. Yet we all know how frequently the man who is brave, generous and noble in times of national crisis may be mean and paltry in private life. The rapid decay of the house of Omri needs some explanation; the tragic failure of Ahab must have had a cause, and this story helps us to an explanation.

It begins in a simple manner. Naboth has a vineyard adjacent to the property of

the king. Ahab has a natural desire to possess the vineyard, and approaches Naboth in a strictly honorable way. He offers him ample compensation in money or in kind. Naboth is conservative. He regards his patrimony as a sacred trust. The king is chagrined. His annoyance preys upon his health, and he has to take to his couch. His wife ascertains the cause of his distress, and immediately sets about removing the cause. Ahab ought to have known that she meant to get the land by fair means or foul. He was so eaten up with his own pride, however, that he allowed her to develop her plan without protest. A foul murder was committed, and Ahab being appraised of the fact accepted the fruits of wickedness. The shamefulness of the crime was enhanced by the suggestion that Naboth had done something to offend the majesty of God, and that the wrath of the Almighty could only be appeased by his execution.

Jezebel knew not Jehovah, or she might well have quailed at the thought of what she was doing in his name. Our God is not the God of wickedness, but of justice and truth.

The crime was Jezebel's, yet Ahab was not to be exonerated. It is true that he put on sackcloth, as though conscious that he was in some way involved in the incident, but he did not repudiate the fruitage of the crime.

Almighty God, restrain us from avarice! Forbid it that we should ever covet our neighbor's field, or anything else that is our neighbor's! Help us in all things to be upright, honest, sincere! Restrain us from doing evil that good may come! Amen.

Friday, 20th. 1 Kings 21. 17-29.

We sometimes imagine that it does not matter what a man believes, but the story of Jezebel is a demonstration that our moral conduct is controlled by the character of the God we worship. Jezebel's gods were projections of her own heart, creatures made in her own image and likeness. In worshiping them she was worshiping her own vagrant self. The product was wickedness.

You and I worship Jehovah the almighty, all-holy, all-just. He is infinite, and he knows all things and judges without partiality. Our morals are built on our sense of God.

Ahab must now reckon with God. Elijah is called of God to find and expose Ahab, and to pronounce judgment upon him. He finds him in the vineyard of the dead man. He utters terrible words, words which because of Ahab's prayer were held back from immediate execution, but which were fulfilled in the person of Joram, the son of Ahab.

"The Hebrews believed that a man lived on in his descendants, so that what they suffered was considered to be part of his punishment." Is there any truth in this idea? Can it be that you and I are preparing disaster for our offspring through our present folly and wickedness? Life is a serious thing. We stand in relationship to others. No man sinneth to himself. Let us live carefully, reverently, with the fear of the Lord always before our eyes!

If Jezebel was guilty, so were the elders of Israel, and the sorrow and suffering which came on the people as well as on the royal house must be recognized as part of the penalty for this crime. It is a lesson reiterated throughout the Old Testament that social crimes bring social punishments. The patronage of religion will not condone man's inhumanity to man. We must put away the evil of our doings if we would worship God acceptably.

O God, we thank thee for the revelation of thy grace in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ! We pray that our sins may be blotted out. We seek grace to live aright. Grant that our children may inherit nothing but blessing as the legacy of our lives. Amen.

Saturday, 21st. 1 Kings 22. 1-40.

In view of an imminent peril arising out of the aggressive policy of Shalmaneser king of Assyria, it seemed wise that Ahab and Jehoshaphat king of Judah should enter into an alliance and should first settle accounts with Benhadad, who had not fulfilled his covenant with Ahab. It would be impossible for Ahab to undertake such a campaign without the support of the national leaders, and he therefore called a council. In so far as politicians were concerned, it seemed all right to act. But Jehoshaphat has enough sense to realize that there is another factor in national politics, and that is the most important of all. He therefore suggests that it might be well to ascertain through a prophet what is the will of God.

And now we discover another of Ahab's weaknesses: he feared and disliked the truth. He did not want a preacher who was more concerned about a thing being right than about its being agreeable. And so he had ignored a true man like Micaiah, and had surrounded himself by prophets of the type of Zedekiah, who would first find out what he wanted and then try to develop a charge in agreement with it. Barnes says, "Zedekiah and his associates were men whom we should naturally call false prophets, for they lured Ahab to his ruin by flattering words. It is, however, to be noted that the true prophet Micaiah regarded them as prophets inspired indeed by a spirit from Jehovah, only by a lying spirit."

Ahab consulted Zedekiah, and was told to go up and prosper. Realizing that the eyes of Jehoshaphat were on him he then turned to Micaiah, and the great and fear-

less prophet first took up the phrase that Ahab wanted to hear, and repeated it, only with accents of scorn. He then told Ahab the truth. Zedekiah was apparently outraged at a prophet daring to tell the truth, and openly insulted him. Ahab heeded not the warning. He went to the battle, and in the battle lost his life.

O Lord, we pray for deeper reverence! Grant that we may cease to be wise in our own eyes! Help us to seek wisdom from above! Give us grace to receive the message that is unpalatable, if it is the word of life! Help our ministers to speak true words to us, words whereby we may be saved! Amen.

Sunday, 22nd. 1 Kings 22. 41-50.

How are we to account for the presence of Jehoshaphat in Samaria? He does not appear to have relished the idea of the campaign against Benhadad. He seems to have been a good man. If he felt it prudent not to interfere too much with some of the religious practices of his time, he himself avoided indulgence in anything that might bring offence to Jehovah.

Just how Jehoshaphat secured the suzerainty over Edom we do not know, but we are told that one of his own deputies administered the affairs of that people. Jehoshaphat reopened the traffic with Ophir which had been discontinued since Solomon's day. His adventure in ship building proved disastrous, and when Ahaziah urged him to try again as his partner he refused. This story is told differently in the book of Chronicles.

The story of Ahaziah is told in few words. His father's vacillations, his mother's idolatries, had laid hold on his imagination and will. He had no originality. He took his religion from his mother. Ahab had condoned Baal worship, his son indulged in it. The things in his home life which were offensive to Jehovah were the things that he thought he ought to indulge in.

If only parents would realize that their children accept their habits and attitudes as normal and natural it might lead to a complete change in the tendencies of the present day. So many imagine that it does not matter what people believe. They hold no settled convictions, and they refrain from giving their children positive instruction in spiritual worship. The young people of today are to be pitied for this. The church school may do its best, but nothing can counteract the influence of the home. Like parent, like child. Ahaziah walks in the way of his father and in the way of his mother.

Almighty God, we pray for a restoration of the family altar! Teach the people, we beseech thee, how to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord! Help parents who seek by precept and example to guide their children into ways of truth! Amen.

2 KINGS.

Monday, 23rd. 2 Kings 1.

Ahaziah meets with a terrible accident. In some way he falls through a lattice against which he is leaning, and receives such injuries as make men alarmed for his life. And now we see the effect of the false teaching of his mother. He might have sought aid from Jehovah, but he was uncertain of Jehovah. He casts about for information about the gods of other nations, and elects to send messengers to Ekron to seek information from a Philistine deity. This god seems to have acquired fame. Some commentators think that its name Baalzebub persisted until New Testament times, when we read of Beelzebub now described as the prince of devils.

The king cannot ignore Jehovah. There is something behind this accident of his which needs an interpreter. Hence Elijah is called upon to interfere. No greater betrayal of Jehovah has ever taken place than this. If Ahaziah had turned to the Lord we know not but that he might have been healed. Now that in his extremity he deliberately ignores Jehovah and sends to a foreign god he shall know that Jehovah has intervened, and no foreign god has the power to turn the divine decree in one single particular.

It is difficult to explain the incident of the calling down of fire on the heads of the innocent soldiers. It is the only painful episode in all the history of Elijah. Apart from it we see a man of extraordinary grandeur. Its object is to teach Ahaziah and all Israel that a terrible insult had been offered to Jehovah, and that the divine anger was kindled. The days were critical. Ahab was dead, Jezebel was alive, and her sinister influence was at work everywhere. If this matter of sending to Ekron had been treated lightly, monotheism might have perished in the earth. It is evident that this is the thought in the mind of the chronicler.

We cannot explain all the problems of that time. We can see that pure and spiritual religion did not come easily to people. There was a struggle, a conflict between the lesser and the higher. Elijah appeared in a critical hour. The effect of his ministry was felt everywhere. The people who were limping between two opinions were challenged to a decision. When their allegiance began to waver they were called back by certain signal acts of judgment. In the end the message of the prophet became charged with a moral purpose which laid the foundation for the spiritual worship in which we engage today.

O Lord our God, thou alone art God, and

there is none beside thee! Help us to worship thee! Help us to be sincere in our religious life! May we strive to do those things which shall redound to thy glory! Amen.

Tuesday, 24th. 2 Kings 2. 1-12.

The passing of Elijah is one of the most dramatic stories in the Old Testament. Just what does it mean? Does it mean that Elijah was taken in his material body and translated to heaven? There are two other stories of translation in the Bible. "Enoch was not, for God took him," and that expression is interpreted as meaning he did not see death. Our Lord Jesus was translated, but his body was a resurrection body.

Had Elijah changed his manner of life, and instead of being a lonely prophet dwelling apart from men, singular in his habits, come to associate with the schools of the prophets? The narrative implies that he was recognized as being the head of certain groups of prophets. As he and Elisha visited these various groups they became aware that his end was approaching, and they should see his face no more.

Elisha sought from his chief the mantle which would mark him out as heir to his authority and power. Elijah reminds him that there is special equipment for special service. The man who would lead others in spiritual experience must be a man of vision. It is not easy to transmit a spiritual office. A man may wear the insignia of office without having the qualities essential to the proper discharge of its functions. Not every man who wears a purple robe has a kingly soul. Not every man clothed in a Geneva gown and standing in a pulpit is a messenger of the Lord.

It is evident that the passing of Elijah was an enfolding of him in the divine presence. It was a simple, awful, august act in which Jehovah took his servant into his own embrace. Men might try to find his earthly casket, and succeed or fail. They mistook the entire transaction. This was no ordinary dying. This was a meeting of the Lord and his anointed, and their passing together into a new and closer relationship.

Our Father, we thank thee for the great and good through whom thy glory has been revealed! We thank thee for the mighty works thou didst accomplish in and through thy servant Elijah. We thank thee that he is to us a pattern of how to pray and how to prevail in prayer. Help us to live in the spirit of prayer this day! Amen.

Wednesday, 25th. 2 Kings 2. 13-25.

Elisha gathered up the mantle of Elijah and turned back to assume the position of leadership which had been vacated. Will he succeed or fail? Is he big enough for the office which he assumes? He steps bravely forward. Is the power to divide the Jordan a power residing in the robe or in the man who wears the robe? Evidently the prophets who recognized Elisha judged him worthy to wear the robe because of what he was in himself. Yet his first acts are not on the same plane as those of his dead leader.

His first act is beneficent. He finds waters that have so much alkali that they destroy fertility. He was a man of some standing and education, and used his knowledge to the neutralizing of the evil effects. On the story as here recorded Barnes says, "The whole Jordan Valley is the ancient basin of a vast inland lake, of which the Dead (Salt) Sea is the survival. The immediate neighborhood of Jericho is fertile even now, but beyond nearly all is barren."

What are we to say about the acts of Elisha against the mocking children? We must remember that he had shaved his head as a sign of mourning for Elijah. To him the removal of Elijah was a national loss. All Israel should have been in mourning, for its greatest personality had gone. In the ages to come men would know that Elijah was one of the greatest men in history. Instead of respect and sorrow the people of Israel were laughing at the memory of the Lord's messenger, and it was to expose and rebuke this contempt for a good man that Elisha cursed the young lads. After all, the boys were reflecting the spirit and attitude of their homes. Things have come to a low ebb when ministers of religion are an object of derision. A wise father will train his household to speak and think respectfully of those who are spokesmen of the Lord.

O God, we invoke thy blessing on all ministers of religion! Be with those who labor in obscure places! Help those who are discouraged! Give thy servants a rich endowment of love from their people! Help them to know thy continual presence! Amen.

Thursday, 26th. 2 Kings 3.

With what pleasure we turn from the stories of tragic failure to the story of Jehoram, the son of Ahab. Next to the house of David no dynasty reigned over the people of God with finer political achievement than the house of Omri. As we have seen, the Assyrians spoke of the Hebrews as the house or people of Omri, and this is eloquent witness to its power. Yet the dynasty came to an end in less than sixty years, and its failure was due to its insincerity. It had courage, sagacity, statesmanship, but it limped in thought. Its spiritual allegiance was divided, hence it failed to retain the good will of God. Jehoram, however, was a man of such quality that Elisha felt himself called to become his adviser and helper. Jehoram made an end to the obelisk of Baal.

Jehoram found himself involved in war with Moab. Omri had made Moab a vassal

state, and the relationship persisted through the reign of Ahab. Then, however, Mesha of Moab began to be restive, and revolted. He refused to pay the tribute when due. Jehoram called on Jehoshaphat, who also was a vassal king, to join him in a campaign against Mesha. The line of march was through the wilderness of Edom. Soon the army began to suffer, for they had no water save that which they had carried with them. Jehoshaphat was a king who liked to feel that he had a messenger of the Lord near him for emergencies such as these, so he inquired for a prophet. Jehoram may not have been as openly religious as some of the other kings, but he was determined not to be involved in any questioning of the authority of Jehovah, and now he is prepared to say that success or failure will in large measure be due to the favor or disapproval of Jehovah. The kings therefore turned to Elisha, and the prophet did not fail them.

The prophet asks for a musician. Why? A great Hebrew teacher says, "Prophecy dwells neither amid melancholy, nor amid apathy, but amid joyfulness." If so, there is a great lesson for the church today. Preaching will regain its power when the church ceases to be melancholy and apathetic, and begin to rejoice in God its Saviour.

O God, help us to be loyal to thee under all circumstances! May our allegiance be undivided! May we remember thy power to deliver us from all evil! Teach us how to overcome evil! For Christ's sake. Amen.

Friday, 27th. 2 Kings 4. 1-7.

The story of Elisha is very different from that of Elijah. Elijah was a lonely man, austere and terrible; Elisha is a man of the people. When the call came to him he must first notify his parents. He lived in his own house, he was kind to his servant, he wrought miracles of helpfulness to common people, he tried to play his part in sympathy and coöperation with others. He was on good terms with the king.

This chapter opens with the story of Elisha's kindness to a widow, The poor woman had a family. She found herself in debt. Her creditor was a hard man determined to extract his pound of flesh. He would destroy a home, he would sell little children into slavery rather than forego a few shekels, and the story of his wickedness moved the prophet. Elisha determined that the man must be outwitted. True, the man was within his rights, but there is something higher than our legal rights.

Having power, the prophet resolved to use it in a divine way. He followed the law of economy, however, in that he would not do for the woman what she could do for herself. We must remember this quality in the divine working. When Israel was in the desert Jehovah fed his people with manna; the manna ceased on the morrow after they did eat the old corn of the land. When the thousands of hungry people were gathered around Jesus the Master said to his disciples, "How many loaves have ye? Bring them to me!" So here Elisha asks, What hast thou got of value in thy house? The woman brings her pot of oil. Then she is sent to borrow empty vessels, and as many as she borrowed were used. Had she borrowed more, she would have got more. Barnes says, "The amount of oil given corresponds with the obedient energy of the woman in borrowing vessels. So in 13. 18, 19 ('he smote thrice, and stayed,') the number of victories granted to Israel over Syria corresponds to the number of times the king of Israel struck the ground with his arrows. Both incidents tell of a testing of faith: to both the king and the woman it happens according to the energy of their faith."

Our Father, we pray for an increase in faith! Teach us to ask great things! Help us to prepare for large answers to our prayers! Thou art the bountiful giver: grant unto us more generous thoughts as we come to thee with our petitions! Amen.

Saturday, 28th. 2 Kings 4. 8-37.

Shunem is situated about 5 miles from Jezreel, 20 from Carmel. Elisha had frequently to pass that way on his journeys.

The story of the lady of Shunem is one of the most beautiful on record. She was possessed of so fine courtesy. She honored the servant of God, and felt it a privilege to show him hospitality. She asked her husband to make adequate provision so that the prophet might not feel himself an intruder, or one transgressing on kindness. She had a beautiful room provided,—not a make-shift. It had walls, and was not a mere erection on the roof. Having built it, she saw to the furnishings. There was at least a bed, a table, a stool, and a lamp. She received Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, along with his master.

Such kindness is deserving of perpetual rememberance. Elisha was so overwhelmed by the thought of her generosity that he thought to recompense her. He therefore offered to introduce her or her husband to court, or if she desired some special office for her husband he would speak to the commander-in-chief. She replied with fine restraint that she was in no need of favor or patronage. She had both place and power among her own people, and had no ulterior motives in showing hospitality to a minister of religion.

Elisha was not surprised at her answer, yet he felt the impulse to show his gratitude. Could his servant discover anything that the lady might desire? Gehazi was a shrewd, keen-witted man. He had missed all signs of the presence of a child in this gracious home. It was even as Gehazi suggested, and the lady was overwhelmed

at the suggestion that after long years at last her arms should embrace her own babe.

Joy and sorrow intermingle in human life. We receive our children as a heritage from the Lord, but alas, it is not always possible to keep them! How many sorrowing parents there are! Let those of us who have been kept from sorrow think tenderly of all who have been bereaved!

Barnes says of verse 33, "He shut out weeping, and shut in prayer." That is a sentence to be remembered. Tears may blur our prayers.

O God, help us to sympathize with sorrowing hearts! Teach us how to get under their loads! Give us a greater faith in our ability to help! Teach us when to weep and when to pray! Strengthen us in prayer! For Christ's sake. Amen.

Sunday, 29th. 2 Kings 4. 38-44.

Elisha appears to have held a position of considerable influence among the prophets as well as at court. While he had his own house, he also seems to have presided over a school of the prophets, and in a time of drought has undertaken responsibility for their sustenance. Some of the prophets had been sent out to gather various herbs with which to make a meal, and one of them had been careless or ignorant, and so had picked something which became an irritant poison. Symptoms of distress soon revealed themselves, and appeal was made to Elisha, who again produced a neutralizing agent such as he produced on a former occasion.

The gift of the man from Baal-shalisha raises an interesting question. How comes it that this man appraises a prophet as a priest? The duty of bringing offerings to the priesthood is emphasized in the law books of Israel, but nothing is said about the care of a prophet. Evidently this man did willingly what others did under necessity. He honored the servants of God who declared his word, and gladly shared his substance with them.

The offering was of corn from his own garden. The Septuagint suggests that the man brought cakes of preserved fruit in his wallet. It was a kindly gift, and it was also most opportune, for the times were hard, and the prophets were evidently feeling the pinch of hunger.

Gehazi has much to learn if he is ever to become to Elisha what Elisha became to Elijah. He must learn that he who obeys divine impulses associates himself with divine resources. Our lives are impoverished because our Christian service is rendered in a manner detached from God. If we were to dwell in Christ, to surrender ourselves to the motions of the Spirit of Christ, to seek to be the instruments of Christ, then the power of Christ would display itself in signs and wonders.

Our Father, we come to thee with contrition because of our failures in faith! We have spoken in thy name, but not by thy Spirit; we have engaged in thy service, but not by thy power. Hence we have been baffled in the presence of human misery, and have failed to bring relief to those who sought our help. We pray for power from on high. Equip us for service, we beseech thee! Amen.

Monday, 30th. 2 Kings 5. 1-19.

Human sorrow breaks down all barriers. Syria and Israel have reached the breaking point, but a needy man, although commander of the Syrian forces, may forget all else in his appeal to an Israelite for aid. No more cruel injustice could be inflicted on a human being than to snatch a girl from her home and country and turn her into a slave, but the sight of human misery demands that the slave girl shall tell what she knows about a way of hope. So we read of the journey of this mighty Syrian general to the home of a prophet, and of his standing as a suppliant at his door.

Elisha does not make the problem of healing an easy one. He impresses Naaman with the fact that it is Israel's God who must accomplish this cure. He stands aloof, as one who is conscious of a higher majesty than that of earth.

Naaman's proud spirit resents such treatment. He thought that a prophet could be bought. He is amazed and chagrined to be treated as a suppliant and to be given difficult and humiliating things to do. We all know how easy it is to imagine that God's succor of our distresses is an easy thing, that we have but to ask and receive. Hence we treat the work of grace in a careless way.

What are we to say about Elisha's answer to Naaman's request with reference to the house of Rimmon? Can a man be loyal in heart and divided in outward allegiance? We might answer, the words "Go in peace" mean simply "Farewell," and Elisha left Naaman to settle his problem for himself. Or we may say with Barnes, "Elisha seems thus tacitly to allow Naaman to halt between two opinions, but the time had not yet come when Israel might act as a missionary of the divine unity to the nations. For a few exceptional cases, exceptional leniency might as yet be practised." Or we may say with Skinner, "Such a case of conscience would no doubt require to be treated differently on the plane of Christian morality where fidelity to one's inmost convictions is of vital importance."

O God, we thank thee that nothing is too hard for thee! Thou canst heal the leper, thou canst deliver every bound soul. There is no respect of persons with thee. Rich or poor, we come to thee with our need, and rejoice that thou canst and wilt supply it. Help us to trust thee fully and perfectly! Amen.